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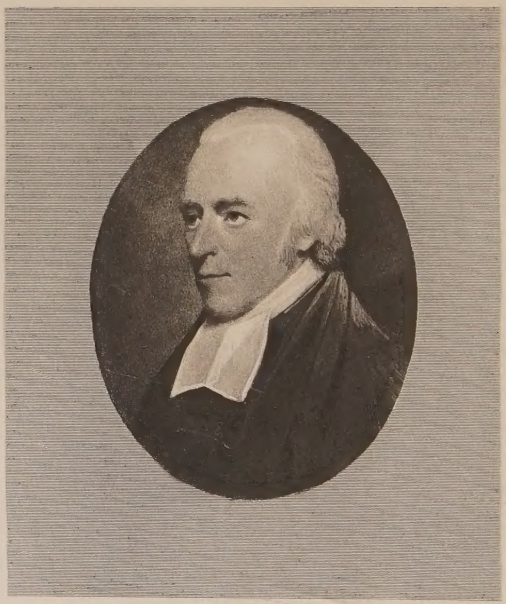

Episcopal Church
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THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

JOHN SKINNER

BISHOP OF ABERDEEN

AND PRIMUS OF THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM WALKER, M.A., LL.D.

MONYMUSK

"The father of such a son, and the son of such a father."

ABERDEEN

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PREFACE.

To the great majority of general readers the best, and probably the only possible, introduction to the study of Church History, is the life of an eminent churchman. All readers take an interest in the fate and fortunes of an individual man : the interest may extend to the events in which the man took part, to the church to which he belonged, and eventually to the "holy Church throughout the world." In proportion to the importance of the events in which the individual churchman took part, is the interest and the value of his history as an introduction to church history.

There has probably never lived a prominent churchman whose life was in its degree better fitted to introduce a reader to church history, than Bishop John Skinner of Aberdeen. Everything conduced to this end—the character of the man, the state of the church, the circumstances of the time. The church was small, the man was great—in administration at least. The times were critical, and fraught with change. The bishop's long and eventful administration was marked by a succession of measures of

cardinal importance to his church: and in the production of these he was ever the moving spirit, the prominent actor, the central figure.

If Bishop John Skinner's life is taken along with that of his father, John Skinner of Linshart, it will be found, that one way or other, the annals of the two embrace almost the whole of the most interesting and most instructive period of the little Scottish church's post-revolution history. During most of that period the church continued in a state of primitive simplicity, which to present-day churchmen has many features of interest and instruction. It was primitive in its poverty, in its depression, in its persecutions by the state, and in its freedom from the restraints of lengthy confessionals. What it did, and what it suffered, cannot but be useful, by way of example or admonition, to existing churches. In these times of change, any church may soon be thrown into a like position. Even now disestablishment is apparently regarded as no distant event in either end of the island. At whatever time it may come, it will probably disappoint the expectations alike of those who desire, and of those who dread it. One thing, however, it may do. It may clear the way for, at least, an earnest attempt at general church re-union. The experience of the last half century must convince every thinking man that no attempt of this sort can possibly succeed unless it rests upon

a very wide and primitively comprehensive basis. The scheme must provide standing room within the church for all parties and persons who *accept* the primitive definitions and practices, though each may put his own interpretation upon the same. The little Scottish church of last century set an example in this matter. In some respects it was narrow enough, but in others, for various reasons, it exhibited a truly primitive breadth. For more than a hundred years after disestablishment, it had no other standard of doctrine than the primitive creeds. Both the Skinners —though by no means "broad churchmen" yet— laboured in different ways to promote a wise breadth and toleration. Both of them contended, with more or less consistency, for the steady adaptation of the church to changed times and circumstances. The father stood out stoutly for the right to hold what he called "alternative explanations" of some of the most mysterious primitive dogmas. The son laboured, from the hour of his elevation, to broaden the church's view of its civil duties, and to establish a better understanding with both the English church and the English state. One of his last acts secured toleration for the use of "alternative" offices for the holy communion.

It will probably be chiefly through such expedients as these, viz., "alternative explanations," and a choice of offices and forms of prayer, that due and

acceptable toleration can be provided within the church for all the parties which, from the diversities of human temperament, will ever be found to prevail, even amongst the most earnest and most enlightened Christians.

The Church of England, with which the Scottish Episcopal Church is necessarily very closely identified, presents even now an example of all but unlimited breadth and comprehension. But from want of freedom of action, and necessary adaptation to changed circumstances, the system is ill regulated. The judicial machinery is obsolete, or out of gear, and tends rather to promote than to compose dissensions.

Very different is the condition of the Episcopal Church of America, by far the greatest and most prosperous of the daughter churches of England. In the American church, all the machinery—legislative and judicial—is in excellent order and in constant use, and all the parties within the church "dwell together in unity." On the latter all-important point, the late Bishop Cotterill of Edinburgh, who had had exceptionally wide knowledge and experience of Anglican churches, bore very emphatic testimony, in presence of the representatives of all the Anglican churches, at the Seabury centenary. "The American church," he said, "has . . . a perfect harmony among all her bishops, clergy, and laity, such as I have

never witnessed in any other church of our communion in the world. . . . I often said of the American church to myself, if in sadness, yet in admiration—'O matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior!'" *

The English church, when she has full freedom to adapt her system to her circumstances, may learn something from her daughters — from the least of them, as well as from the greatest. Re-union may then take place in England. In no country, however, can re-union, of a solid and durable character, be other than a slow and most difficult work. Long time will be necessary for its accomplishment. A great point will however be gained, if the members of all churches would keep it steadily in view, and if they do not work and pray for its accomplishment, yet avoid the casting of needless obstacles in its path.

In the preparation of the following Memoir, the writer has had access, through the kindness of friends, to a mass of unpublished materials. The Rev. John Skinner Wilson, of St. George's, Edinburgh, kindly put at his service a large collection of papers, including apparently the greater part of the more important

* Speech at Seabury Centenary Reception Banquet—See Report, &c., pp. 107-8. The merits of the American Episcopal Church's constitution were recognised in a very emphatic way by the late accomplished Principal P. C. Campbell, of Aberdeen University, in his work on "The Theory of the Ruling Eldership." "Its admirable constitution combines the advantages of Presbytery and Episcopacy." See p. 181.

letters received by Bishop John Skinner during almost the whole period of his administration. The Rev. Robert Skinner, English chaplain at Cologne, with equal readiness, sent, for his inspection, a small collection of the bishop's papers, which are in his possession. To these gentlemen the writer makes his grateful acknowledgments; also to the Right Reverend the Primus, and to Hugh James Rollo, Esq., W.S., to whom he is indebted for access to the Episcopal minute book and other documents in the custody of the latter, at 14 Young Street, Edinburgh. For the use of the first minute book of the diocese of Aberdeen, a record from which he has drawn many interesting particulars, the writer was indebted to a highly esteemed old friend, who has been lately taken to his rest—the late Dean Harper of Inverurie. To other friends, from whom he has received information, the writer makes his acknowledgments in the proper place, in the course of the work. He would here only further acknowledge his indebtedness to Dr. William Alexander of the *Aberdeen Free Press*, and to the Rev. Dr. Gammack of Wellington House, Aberdeen, and Mr. J. P. Edmond, for valued help in seeing the work through the press; also to Miss Grace Skinner, of Malvern Link, the bishop's grand-daughter, for the use of the miniature of him, by A. Robertson, in order to its reproduction for this work, by the process of photogravure.

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Portrait of Bishop John Skinner, from a miniature painted by A. Robertson, now in the possession of Miss Grace Skinner, Malvern Link . . . . . *To face titlepage.*

THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

JOHN SKINNER,

BISHOP OF ABERDEEN.

CHAPTER I.

1744-1782.

Birth—Family—Imprisonment at nine years of age—Education—Tutorship at Bannockburn—Ordination—Settlement at Bernie—Marriage—Marriage Contract—The Bride's dower—Ministry in Ellon district—Removal to Aberdeen—Success there—Removal to Longacre—Election as Coadjutor Bishop of Aberdeen—Consecration.

JOHN SKINNER—the eminent son of an eminent father—and the greatest bishop of the Scotch post-revolution Episcopal Church, was born at his father's pro-parsonage cottage at Linshart, Longside, May 17th, 1744, just one year before the outbreak of the last fateful Jacobite rebellion. He was the fourth John Skinner of the family that can be traced with certainty in a direct line of succession. His grandfather was the very efficient parish schoolmaster, first of Birse, and afterwards of Echt, Aberdeenshire. His great-grandfather was,* it seems, John

* From genealogical tree of Skinner family, by William Skinner, Esq., W.S., Town Clerk of Edinburgh.

Skinner, proprietor of Coningsyard, St. Andrews—a property which now belongs to the University of St. Andrews. The genealogist of the family believes that the Skinners came originally from England, and may be traced back to Dr. Robert Skinner, successively Bishop of Bristol (1636), of Oxford (1641), and of Worcester (1663). However this may be, the subject of this memoir would have done no discredit to that oft-promoted and well-beneficed prelate. John was one of a family of seven, and the only one that was in any way distinguished by talent and force of character. He had three brothers and three sisters. The sisters, Margaret, Grace, and Elizabeth, all married in the Longside district, but with the exception of Elizabeth, the mother of Dean Cumming; they left no issue. John was the second son, and his three brothers, James the eldest, Marianus the third, and Alexander the fourth, all emigrated, while young, to America, and all died there or in the West Indies, at a comparatively early age. All three were unfortunate and little heard of, and a source of great grief and protracted anxiety to their aged father—sons of his sorrow; while from first to last John was the son of his right hand—

His pride, his stoup, his ornament!

Voluntary Imprisonment.

At the early age of nine, John gave proof of that tender attachment to his father which marked him through life, by showing himself not only "ready," but resolute, to "go with him to prison." In the year

1753, his father was, for his church's political, and for his own poetical, offences, cast into Old Aberdeen jail. John insisted on being permitted to join him, and would, it is said, have pined to death, had permission been refused. Permission was given, and the little volunteer prisoner was at once made happy. "The iron" did not "enter his soul;" while his prison experience was a fit and timely seasoning for the trying career that was before him. It was an inoculation in persecution like the casting of the infant Moses into the Nile; and in this case also, the effect was visible "when he was come to years."

His Education.

John's education appears to have been conducted, from the first, with a view to the ministry of the church. After a preliminary training at Longside parish school, he and his elder brother, James, were sent to Echt, to be prepared for college, by their scholarly grandfather. It is not known if James ever proceeded to the university; but John entered Marischal College in the autumn of 1757, when only thirteen and a-half years of age, and left it, a graduate, before he was quite seventeen, or about the average age at which Aberdeen students now enter; so greatly has the standard of attainments been raised. Wolsey, at Oxford, was known as the boy-bachelor, because he graduated at sixteen. There were many boy-graduates at Aberdeen then, and for long afterwards; and of course they sometimes had a difficulty in procuring suitable employment. If they were non-jurors, there was only

one resource for them—private teaching. As a rule, the youthful candidate for orders, commenced, when he got his degree, a severe combined course of private tuition and self-tuition—like that of the modern pupil teacher, who teaches during the day, and learns at night.

Tutor at Bannockburn.

John Skinner was fortunate in finding at once an eligible opening for carrying on this course of combined tuition. He obtained, and for two years held, the appointment of tutor in the family of Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn—a gentleman who is now represented by a prominent Edinburgh churchman, Hugh James Rollo, Esq., W.S. John made the best use of his opportunities here, reading steadily and systematically, under the epistolary direction of his learned and lively father, whose paternal instructions —judging from a specimen which has been preserved —contained a characteristic Horatian admixture of the grave and the gay ; a humorous Latin ode taking its place beside grave vernacular dissertations on authors and books.*

Ordination.

In compliance with a law or permissive rule of his church, Dr. Chalmers was licensed as a preacher before the proper age, because he was "a lad of pregnant parts." John Skinner was "a lad of pregnant parts," and he was

* See "Life of Skinner of Linshart," p. 124 (2nd edition).

ordained and put in charge of two congregations when only nineteen—four years before the canonical age—in compliance, however, with no law of the church, but with the inexorable no-law of necessity. The bishops were, in those times, constrained to lay hands on "beardless boys," as the Longside churchwoman said. (Skinner of Linshart, p. 27.)

John Skinner had only completed his nineteenth year, when on June 5th, 1763, his father wrote him a long letter, in which he informed him that he had made arrangements with Bishop Gerrard of Aberdeen, to have him ordained as soon as possible, and set over the two Ellon charges, Chapelhall and Bernie. The value of this double charge was, he said, "in no way inferior" to his own income at Longside. How great an encouragement this was can be ascertained from the actual money value of the charges, which from "documents in his (John Skinner's) own hands" is shown to have been from £25 to £30 per annum! This was probably about the highest salary then received by any country incumbent. It was more than double the salary promised to Mr. Morrice of Blairdaff, twenty years before, by a congregation with more than three hundred communicants.* It seems to have been hardly necessary for John's father to

* 234 merks Scots, or £13, was Mr. Morrice's stipend. The congregation at first offered him only 200 merks, or a little more than £11 sterling. The merk was equivalent to 13⅓d., or thirteen pence and a *plack*. In the history of Skinner of Linshart, the writer mistakenly assumed the merk to be worth 13½d. It took three placks to make two halfpence. Hence the old saying, to "make your plack a bawbee" by any transaction, was to gain some pecuniary advantage from it.

warn him, as he does, in this letter, not to expect from the church "more than a bare subsistence."

John was on the point of leaving Bannockburn, and his father arranged to meet him, on his way north, at Banchory-Ternan, where Thomas Skinner (an M.A. of St. Andrews), Skinner senior's half-brother, was parish schoolmaster. His father suggested to John to endeavour to spend the previous day (Sunday) at Northwater Bridge, Kincardine, with the Rev. Alexander Lunan, the venerable Gamaliel, at whose feet he himself had sat. John was ordained almost immediately on reaching home.

Overtown of Dudwick.

As soon as he was ordained, John took up his residence at Overtown of Dudwick, or Bernie, a farm which he rented from Fullarton of Dudwick—a Russian general—whose Russian habits greatly scandalised his youthful tenant and pastor. For one thing the general, at first, always demanded payment of his "bondages" or dues *on Sunday*.* Mr. Skinner would pay only on a lawful day, yet the general and he, after a time, came to a good understanding, and were soon also connected by marriage.

His Marriage.

About two years after his settlement at Bernie, Skinner married a lady to whom he had been attached from his earliest years, Miss Mary Robertson, daughter of his father's immediate predecessor in the charge of

* Letter from Rev. George Sutherland, Portsoy.

Longside, the Rev. William Robertson, a gentleman who was connected with the class of landed gentry on both sides—his father being Thomas Robertson of Downiehills, and his mother a daughter of Sir John Guthrie, formerly of King-Edward, latterly of Ludquharn. Mr. Robertson had removed to Dundee; but, on his death, his wife and daughter returned to Longside, and took up their residence apparently at Ludquharn. Miss Robertson was then only nine years of age. Young John Skinner and she were near neighbours and intimate friends, from their tender years.

The Marriage Contract.

This document now lies before the writer. It is very interesting, not only from its phraseology, which is archaically quaint, especially in the matter of clerical titles, but also from the fact that it fixes approximately the date of the marriage, which is antedated by more than a year in the "Annals of Scottish Episcopacy" (p. 15). Mr. Skinner, Forfar, says his father and mother "were happily united on the 27th day of August, 1764." This document proves conclusively that their happy union did not take place for more than a year after that date. The son mistook the day of the month (August 27th) on which the contract was drawn up for the day of the marriage, and he made 1765 into 1764. Witness the contract—"Att Breaside of Ludquharn, this twenty-seventh day of August, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five years, It is contracted, agreed upon, and matrimonially contracted and ended betwixt Mr. John Skinner, Minister of the

Gospel, residing at Overtown of Bernie, in the Parish of Ellon, and Mrs. Mary Robertson, daughter of deceased Mr. William Robertson, Minister of the Gospel at Dundee, on the one and the other Parts, in manner following." Here is the year clearly given in words—sixty-five—and both in the body and on the back of the contract, it is as clearly set down in figures—1765. Then as to the *day*—that was left so far uncertain, but it was to be on some day betwixt August 27th and September 12th.—"The said Mr. John Skinner, and Mrs. Mary Robertson, Doe Hereby accept one another for lawful spouses, and promise to solemnise the holy Bond of Matrimony betwixt them, as God's Word doth allow, betwixt and the twelfth day of September next, as they shall think expedient." Thus the true date of the marriage was not August 27th, 1764, but some day betwixt August 27th and September, 12th, 1765.

The Bride's Dower.

The contract was drawn up by "Mr. John Skinner, Minister of the Gospel at Linshart," and it carefully safeguarded the interests of the bride, who did "Hereby assign, make over, and give up to the sd Mr. John Skinner, Her future Husband, all and Haill the sum of Ten Thousand Merks Scots Money, contained in a Bond of Date July 13th, 1765." One hundred and twenty years ago, ten thousand merks Scots (£555$\frac{5}{9}$)* was no mean middle-class dower in the north

* Not £562 10s., as erroneously stated in "Skinner of Linshart," p. 125.

of Scotland. If well invested, its proceeds, in this case, doubtless equalled the stipend of the youthful "Minister of the gospel." In other worldly ways John's marriage proved advantageous to him. His wife's mother, Mrs. Robertson, who had a competency of her own, made his house her home till her death, at the ripe age of 92. Mrs. Skinner's aunt had also married a son (apparently the eldest son) of the lord of the manor —Fullarton of Dudwick. The clerical farmer of Overtown, it may be safely assumed, was not rack-rented; and, as he was an excellent manager in everything of a practical nature, he doubtless made the farm pay, and yield large contributions to the comforts of his home. Altogether, John Skinner, in the days of his Ellon incumbency, was one of the best off country pastors of the time.

The Ministry.

Then in the chief thing of all, the work of the ministry, Skinner, in his country charge, was blessed with very marked success. He was a vigilant and faithful pastor, and an effective and animated preacher. He had hard work "for the first two or three years of his incumbency." He had "to officiate, during the summer season, twice every Sunday, and to travel no less a distance than 15 or 16 miles to and from the different chapels, where his people assembled." The week-day duties must have been correspondingly harassing. But, like the late Bishop Blomfield, John Skinner had "a passion for hard work"—and hard work, mental or bodily, or both, was his lot from first

to last. He was always most diligent in catechising; and his Ellon flocks are said to have been, in some matters of ritual, in advance of their neighbours. For one thing, they "turned to the east at the Gloria, as well as at the Creed." *

Removes to Aberdeen.

The result of hard and faithful work, was promotion to a sphere which offered full scope for his abilities. After eleven years at Ellon, John Skinner was called to Aberdeen. He was chosen as their pastor by the congregation which is now represented by St. Andrew's, King street, Aberdeen—a large congregation which his pastorate has made well known on both sides of the Atlantic. In fact it may be said, that his pastorate *made* the congregation. It was in the lowest state of depression when he was called to preside over it. It met "in a dwelling-house within a close on the west side of the Guestrow" (the Guestrow being itself only a narrow close). Before this the congregation had met in the yet narrower "Concert-close, on the east of the Broadgate." Before that "the meeting-house was in an out-of-the-way place" in the same neighbourhood, "at the back of the Tolbooth." † It was here apparently that the meeting-house stood when it was burnt down by the Duke of Cumberland's soldiers

* For this and several other interesting particulars, the writer is indebted to the Rev. N. K. Macleod, Ellon.

† These particulars are derived from an interesting history of the congregation of St. Andrew's, by Dr. Grub. Aberdeen: W. Bennet, 1846; p. 15.

with such "good husbandry and frugality"—the wood not being consumed all at once, but industriously reserved to heat our "bakers' ovens," says the lively Mr. James Ray, the light horse volunteer of Whitehaven, in his "Complete History of the Rebellion." *

The reader will see that the charge to which Skinner was now called, was only a charge or a field of labour. There was no church, no parsonage, no school; no ecclesiastical buildings, or congregational endowments of any sort—nothing whatever but the three hundred "living stones." But to the able, energetic, and zealous John Skinner this was enough. It gave him his opportunity.

His son says that Mr. Skinner was very reluctant to leave his attached Ellon flocks, and that he would not have done so had it not been for the greatly superior advantages which Aberdeen offered for the education of his growing family, which now numbered four—three girls and a boy; another boy having died in infancy. No doubt this was one powerful inducement. But, consciously or unconsciously to Skinner himself, the chief inducement was the field of labour—the wider "sphere of usefulness."

* See "From the Tone of Somersetshire to the Don of Aberdeenshire," by Alfred James Monday. Aberdeen: Edmond & Spark (p. 66). Mr. Ray found Jacobitism and "non-juring" rampant in "the gentlemen's houses" at which he, as a volunteer, was "put up to quarters." "What gave me," he says, "the most concern was that so many of the handsomest of the Scots ladies were attendants of these meeting-houses." He could, nevertheless, indulge in good-natured banter with them. See p. 72.

His Success in Aberdeen.

As has been said, it was to a position of great capabilities, rather than to one of great actual advantages, that Skinner succeeded. This became evident as soon as he appeared upon the scene. His ministry wrought an instant and palpable change. The capabilities of the position at once developed into actualities. Within one year of his appointment, the congregation had doubled in number, and was driven to seek enlarged accommodation. This marked success spoke volumes as to the faithfulness and efficiency of the pastor; and the pastor's methods of action were frequently described to the writer, with emphatic approval, many years ago, by aged members of St. Andrew's congregation, who had sat under him. They all dwelt upon his energy, activity, and general faithfulness in the pulpit and out of it; but the characteristic of "the old bishop," which they dwelt upon above all, was his *vigilance*—the ceaseless care with which he watched over his people every day of the week, but especially on Sunday. On that day he scanned carefully every pew, and took mental note of all absentees. Then, as early in the week as possible, he went round among the people and inquired if those who were absent on Sunday were ill. Too often they were quite well; but the better they were, the more they were embarassed by their pastor's attention. In this way the people soon came to feel that there was a sharp eye on them on Sunday, whether they were in church or not; and if they were not in church, they

would soon have a call from the bishop; if they did not hear him on Sunday, they would *see* him on Monday.

Removal to Longacre.

Under such watchful care, conjoined with a manifest interest in their welfare, the congregation "grew and multiplied," and the Guestrow "meeting-house" overflowed. That large "upper room" had to be replaced by a larger; for no church could then be erected in Aberdeen under the very eye of the magistrates. In the year 1776, therefore, Mr. Skinner built for himself a large dwelling-house in Longacre—a narrow lane or close between Broad street and North street—and fitted up the upper floor of it as "a meeting-house." This enlarged place of worship accommodated nearly twice as many people as the former; and it continued to serve the congregation, though with ever-increasing difficulty, till the repeal of the penal laws permitted the erection of a regular church.

Before Mr. Skinner had been more than a few years in Aberdeen, he had made his congregation the leading Episcopal charge in the north-east of Scotland—the home and stronghold of Scotch Episcopacy—and he was now in a fair way to make Aberdeen the headquarters of the church, south as well as north. And by raising his congregation, he raised himself. The position he held as the pastor of such a flock in the chief city of the north, marked him out for early promotion.

Coadjutor Bishop of Aberdeen.

Promotion came within six years, and it came—not as it was wont to come in those days, "from the east or from the west, from the north or from the south"—perhaps from the remotest diocese of the church—it came from his own diocese. He was chosen coadjutor to Bishop Kilgour, and his field of labour lay around him—a great advantage both for him and the church. The fact that John Skinner entered the episcopate as a coadjutor, is one of two or three cases that go far to redeem the coadjutor system, which, like the old pocket-burgh system, had its advantages. It was, however, a peculiar case. A coadjutor was really and greatly needed for Aberdeen at that time; and Skinner was manifestly the man for the office. Then he was not only the nominee of the bishop, but also the choice of the clergy. "He was duly elected to the office of a Bishop by the Presbyters of the district" ("Annals," p. 19). Bishop Kilgour handed in to the Episcopal College his "Letter to the Presbyters of the district of Aberdeen," expressing his desire to have a coadjutor; "together with the said Presbyters' answer to him, recommending the Rev. Mr. John Skinner in Aberdeen," &c. (Episcopal Minute Book, Synod of 1782.) The appointment was, in fact, one of the best that was ever made in the church. Before he began to rule, and during his long administration, John Skinner proved himself fit to rule—*capax imperii*—full of zeal, energy, initiative, decision and force of character, and general practical

ability. He was located in the best place, and was possessed of adequate means for the due discharge of his duties.

Consecration.

He was consecrated September 25th, 1782, at the chapel of Luthermuir, near Laurencekirk—a little building, which, from its secluded position, was greatly in favour with the churchmen of those times. It was free from all risks of molestation or intrusion. It was one of the very few churches which at that time stood apart from a dwelling-house, or other secular building. Another circumstance made it a very fit place for the consecration of John Skinner—it represented the old church of Northwater Bridge, and it was built by Alexander Lunan, his father's father in the faith.

NOTE TO CHAP. I.

LUTHERMUIR.

THE little thatched "Meeting-House" at Luthermuir, four miles south-west of Laurencekirk, with its closely-adjoining thatched "minister's house," and "stable, with ten stalls" for the farmer's horses, was a building of some importance a hundred years ago, and of no little interest to churchmen even now. The writer is indebted to the Rev. Dr. Gammack, Wellington House, Aberdeen, for a full account of the building of the whole establishment, with the subsequent history and present condition of the same.

The chapel was erected in the year 1766, when the violence of the persecution had sensibly abated. It was built for the congregation that met at Northwater Bridge, which lay about two miles further south. This was the congregation to which Mr. Lunan removed, from Blairdaff, in the year 1744, and over which he continued to preside for three years longer.

The site on which the chapel was built, belonged, at the time, to Miss Ogilvie of Balbegno. Two years after (in 1768), a charter was obtained for the site, but in a peculiar shape. Apparently the site was made a feu within a feu—possibly for protection. "The charter was made out in the name of Mr. John Buchanan, on a feu of 16 acres, of which four acres had to be devoted to the purpose of a place of worship for the Episcopal Church, and for the convenience of the minister." "Accordingly Mr. Buchanan disponed to the trustees of the congregation the four acres."

"The meeting-house was ready for use in the spring of 1767, and resolutions were passed to build the minister's house" and the stable.

In the minute of 24th November, 1770, there is a resolution which is strikingly illustrative of the condition of matters in that "day of small things":—"We likeways resolve, that every one who bring [*sic*] horses to the chapel, shall send four weases of straw, twelve ropes, and twelve prods for thatching the stable, against the end of next week."

In those times not only stables but churches were still sometimes thatched; and each worshipper, or head of a family, was bound to furnish a certain number of bundles of heather, or sheaves of thatch—(weases, wises, waises, as the word is differently pronounced in different districts).

When Bishop John Skinner was consecrated at Luthermuir, "Mr. A. Jamieson was the minister. When Mr. Jamieson went to Glasgow, the four acres and all the buildings thereon were 'disponed' to him in lieu of the payment of outlays and 'byelies.'"

After passing through several hands, the property is now in possession of Mrs. Douglas, St. Ann's, Brechin, the granddaughter of the original disponee.

The meeting-houses of the persecution period served their purpose, when for a time they sheltered the worshippers from wind and weather. After 1792, they gave place to more decent structures, and descended to purposes of secular utility. Mr. Lunan's first meeting-house at Northwater Bridge, became "a hen-house." Luthermuir Chapel, and its annexed buildings, have been modernised with slated roofs, and turned into dwellings for cottagers.

CHAPTER II.

1782-1783.

His influence at once felt through the Church—Circumstances favourable—The Great Revolutions—Proposal of a Bishop for America—Correspondence with Dr. Berkeley—Berkeley recommends Missionary Bishops—Skinner and his Colleagues refuse—Movement by American Churchmen—Election of Dr. Seabury—Delay of Seabury's application to Scotch Bishops—A second Correspondence with Dr. Berkeley—Scotch Bishops discuss proposal to Consecrate a Bishop for English Non-jurors—Decline—Agree to Consecrate Dr. Seabury.

MR. SKINNER'S appointment, though only as coadjutor, was an era in the church's history. He was by far the ablest man in the college, he had youth and vigour, and was in touch with the age. His influence was soon felt throughout the whole church. What Macaulay says of the magical effect of the advent to power of the first William Pitt, is true in its measure of the first Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen. From the hour of his appointment "the pressure of his firm hand was felt in every department."

The Great Revolutions.

Times and circumstances favoured him. The times were revolutionary, and revolution could hardly

fail, directly or indirectly, to help rather than hurt the little proscribed church. The great English revolution was approaching its centenary, and it was being already commemorated by the greater American, and was about soon to be commemorated more seasonably by the still greater French revolution. These mighty convulsions "shook the world"—both worlds, in fact—the eastern and the western; and, as it happened, the shaking of the western world communicated a happy and healthy impulse to the little dormant church in Scotland. On the achievement of independence, the churchmen of America set about procuring a bishop for themselves. Necessity brought them to Scotland. The little church helped them, and thereby unspeakably helped itself. It raised itself from the dust, and stood forth before the world as a power.

The Consecration of Dr. Seabury.

This event, so well known from its recent centennial commemoration,* was the first question with which Bishop John Skinner had to deal after his consecration, and no man on either side of the Atlantic had so much to do with it. On him almost the whole management of it fell, and the history of it is simply a chapter in his life.

Preparatory Steps.

About a fortnight after his consecration, the question of sending a bishop to America was pressed upon

* See Note to Chapter III.

Bishop Skinner with great earnestness and force by a zealous and hereditary friend of America and the American Church, viz., Dr. Berkeley, sub-dean of Canterbury, and son of the famous philosophic and philanthropic Bishop of Cloyne. Dr. Berkeley was, at that time, living at St. Andrews, for the education of his son, and had become acquainted with the future Bishop Gleig, then clergyman at Pittenweem, and had also read a published sermon of Mr. Skinner's, on "The Duty of a Suffering Church." His son had also been lately in Aberdeen, and had received some attentions from Mr. Skinner. Having thus formed some sort of acquaintance with Mr. Skinner, Dr. Berkeley resolved to urge, through him, on the Scotch bishops, who mostly lived in the north, a project which he had conceived of sending out a missionary or "itinerant" bishop to America. He therefore, on October 9th, 1782, wrote on the subject to "Mr. Skinner"—thus addressing a bishop "unawares." Mr. Skinner had been consecrated two weeks before, but in those slow times the intelligence took two months to travel to St. Andrews. The letter merely suggested "the introduction of Protestant Episcopacy" into America.

Bishop Skinner replied (about the middle of November), expressing doubts whether such a "plant, out of a dry ground" as his mother church, could "spread its roots into another" soil, but assuring his correspondent, that if he had any definite proposal to make, it should, "through his hands," be "duly intimated to the Bishops of Scotland," dropping no hint, however, that he himself was one of those bishops. In reply (November 18, 1782), Berkeley urged his

missionary scheme—that two or three bishops should be sent out to America. The Americans would receive bishops from Scotland more readily than they would from the state-trammelled churches of England and Ireland. Before receiving Skinner's answer, Berkeley had heard of his correspondent's promotion to the episcopate, and wrote (December 3rd, 1782) to congratulate him. On December 21st, the bishop sent Berkeley a statement of his own sentiments, and those of his two northern colleagues, Bishops Kilgour and Petrie, on his proposed missionary scheme. It was discouraging. The bishops deeply sympathised with the zealous doctor in his laudable object, but they all, and Bishop Skinner in particular, saw great obstacles to its accomplishment. Bishop Skinner specified three obstacles—

1. The political obstacle—the risk of embroiling the little church with the British government. The preliminaries of peace had indeed been signed (November 30); but "nothing" wrote the bishop "can be done on our side, till the independence of America shall be fully and irrevocably recognised, &c." Even then there might be trouble.

2. Again, there was "a scarcity," "nay," added the bishop, "I fear a total want of proper persons for such an undertaking." The little church had difficulty in supplying its own charges.

3. The third obstacle was, the doubt whether bishops sent forth by a Jacobitical church, would be received by the democratic Americans.

The first step (as the bishop went on to point out) was an application from the Americans themselves,

and an assurance of "support from the Episcopal clergy," with a promise of obedience and respect. He thought episcopacy should be sought for America from Ireland, as there appeared to be "a sort of sympathy between the two countries."

Dr. Berkeley replied (January 6th, 1783), denying that there were any real obstacles, or that bishops would be better received in America if they came from Ireland than if they came from Scotland. As to the last and chief difficulty, that of finding in Scotland a proper person to send, there could be no reality in *that.* "Surely my good brother, Mr. Gleig of Pittenweem, is, for piety, deep sense, and reflection, and even knowledge of the world, fully competent for the purpose."

Berkeley pleaded in vain. In his reply (February 22, 1783) the bishop expressed for himself and colleagues a still more decided disapproval of the scheme of missionary bishops, and laid down yet more distinctly the only conditions on which he and they could agree to take part in sending a bishop to America, viz., that the Americans should first make an application to them for the purpose, and hold out "the offer of some proper and necessary support."

To this wise resolution, Bishop Skinner and his colleagues adhered. Dr. Berkeley (March 21, 1783) reclaimed earnestly, but in vain, against it. "Episcopacy," he said, "must be sent before it is asked—Christianity waited not at the first; the Church of Rome waits not now for any invitation or encouragement." Missionary bishops could, he maintained, be very easily supported, as witness the case of the Roman

Catholic bishops in Scotland. "Bishop Geddes told me that the Pope allows him £25 per annum, and that he has no other settled support; the other Popish Bishops in Scotland have £5 per annum each, from the Bishop of Rome." Berkeley thought, if that opportunity was not seized, there might be "delay for years, perhaps of one or two centuries." Better even such delay, thought the Scotch bishops, than the sending of a bishop unasked and unprovided for. The movement must come from within, not from without.

Movement by the American Churchmen.

The movement was in fact going on in America at that very time. Whilst the ardent, yet despondent, Berkeley was writing in Scotland (March 21st, 1783) that they would not move perhaps "in one or two centuries," they were actually moving—as the earth was moving while Galileo was on his knees declaring that it did not. The preliminary negotiations had been all settled, and four days after, Dr. Berkeley wrote (*i.e.*, on March 25, 1783), the clergy of Connecticut (ten of the fourteen) met at Woodbury, and made their election of a presbyter to proceed to England and obtain consecration as their bishop. These clergy proved their earnestness by the thorough and provident arrangements they made. In order to make sure of sending one presbyter, they elected two—Jeremiah Leaming and Samuel Seabury—it being thought that the former might, from age and delicate health, decline the appointment, as, in fact, he did. Then to make sure of a consecration, they instructed "Dr. Seabury,

if none of the regular Bishops of the Church of England" would "ordain him, to go down to Scotland and secure ordination from a Non-juring Bishop." *

These events were, at the moment, falsifying the prophecy of the ardent Berkeley, and justifying the demurrer of the cautious Skinner. Yet the correspondence of these friendly brethren was far from being fruitless. It prepared the way for action when the time for action came.

Before the time came, another correspondence passed between the two, which was also indirectly serviceable.

Delay of Dr. Seabury's Application.

The American bishop-elect made no direct or personal application to the Scotch bishops till he had exhausted all chances of consecration in England. As will be seen, it was August 31st, 1784, before his application was made. But he had been feeling his way a year before. As early as November, 1783, a question was put to Bishop Kilgour, as primus, by Mr. James Elphinstone—a Scotch literary man—doubtless with Seabury's knowledge, and probably at his suggestion. The question was whether consecration could be obtained in Scotland for such a one as Dr. Seabury, or, as it was expressed, "for an already dignified and well-vouched American, now at London

* Letter written a few months after the meeting, by the Rev. Daniel Fogg, one of the ten electors. See "Beardsley's Life of Seabury," p. 104—American edition. The church owes much to Dr. Beardsley for the great care and research with which he has cleared up this and other obscure matters connected with the Seabury question.

for the purpose of perpetuating the Episcopal Reformed Church in America, particularly in Connecticut."

Second Berkeley Correspondence.

Intelligence of the above application having been communicated to Dr. Berkeley by the Rev. John Allan, Edinburgh, the doctor at once wrote to Bishop Skinner (November 24th, 1783). He was greatly pleased with the news, and earnestly hoped that "the Scotch Bishops, who were not shackled by any Erastian connexion, would not send the applicant empty away."

In England, the sending of "a Protestant Bishop from Scotland to America" would highly gratify most of the highest officials both in church and state, though from motives of policy they might say nothing about it. "The King," said Berkeley, "*some* of his Cabinet Counsellors [*sic*], all our Bishops (except peradventure the Bishop of St. Asaph), and all the learned and respectable clergy in our church will, at least, secretly rejoice." This was an important assurance. It was probably substantially correct, but it was not apparently regarded by the Scotch bishops as entirely satisfactory on the point. It was natural that Bishop Skinner should, in his answer (November 29th, 1783), express wonder why, if so many "respectable characters" approved of the step, they withheld "their countenance and support." "There must be some ostensible reason." In his next letter (December 8th, 1783) he says plainly, "It would also be convenient to know why the English Bishops have denied him consecration."

In his reply (St. Andrews, December 10th, 1783) Dr. Berkeley answers this question. The reason why the English bishops had not, "in the present state of matters," consecrated Dr. Seabury, was that they could not. Nothing could be done in the matter "without Royal license at least, if not Parliamentary likewise."

Dr. Berkeley Premises a Question.

In order to show that there was no risk of "fire and faggots" to the Scotch bishops should they undertake the consecration, Dr. Berkeley asks permission "to premise a question." The question was one that rather staggered Bishop Skinner. It opened his eyes to both past and present practices of the Episcopal College, and apparently it not only helped this consecration, but also hindered another. The bishop had, in his last letter, spoken of "the depressed, sinking Church in Scotland." "Have not," slyly asked Dr. Berkeley, "the Prelates of the 'depressed, sinking Church in Scotland' at any time consecrated a Bishop for the Non-jurors in England?" "I humbly apprehend," he added, "that they have done so, and yet no persecution hath arisen to them in consequence of that *interference* with her sister Church." Berkeley was right. Bishop Skinner did not know it, however. He knew nothing of the consecration by the Scotch bishops of "a Bishop for the Non-jurors in England." Still less did he dream that at that very time another such consecration was being seriously thought of by some of his elder colleagues.

Another Bishop for the English Non-jurors.

It was well that Bishop Skinner was entirely ignorant in the matter of consecrations for the English non-jurors. He thus could, as he did, with perfect sincerity and good faith, and without offence, give full and free expression to his views and feelings on the subject, in a letter to his principal and primus, Bishop Kilgour. He made it very plain that he thought it great folly to quarrel with the powerful living church of England, by a vain attempt to prop up the fast-"sinking" non-juring "remnant." He enclosed Dr. Berkeley's letter in his own to the primus (December 16th, 1783), and referring to it, said, "I imagine he spoke without book, when he supposes that our Bishops have consecrated a Prelate for the Non-jurors in England. It does not occur to me that this has ever yet been the case; and from his calling it an *interference*, &c., you may see in what light the English clergy look upon it, and how ready they will be to excuse their own interference in Scotland, under the notion that they are doing as they are done by." Here was a distinct condemnation of any attempt to "interfere" by consecration in England.

A Truce with England.

But the bishop went further. He wanted some "explanation" between the English and Scotch bishops, or "a compromise to cease hostilities on both sides"—a truce. For this purpose "Dr. Berkeley

might be very useful as an umpire." Desiring to be "set right," if he was mistaken in supposing that there had never been any "interference," he adds, "I believe I may promise, in your name, that if the English Bishops will give over their interference with us, you will readily engage to give them no further cause to complain."

Urged in this natural, unsuspecting way, the bishop's objection to "interference" must have had great weight with Bishop Kilgour.

General Policy of Conciliation.

But the ardent coadjutor went still further, and with mingled earnestness and delicacy, urged upon the aged primus the adoption of a general policy of conciliation, in order to take advantage of the "opening which appeared for our Church emerging from her obscurity." Practically, he carried the good primus with him in everything.

Refusal of Bishop to Non-jurors.

All the three bishops, who corresponded on the subject—Bishops Kilgour, Rose, and Petrie—declined to "tie themselves in the way that Bishop Skinner proposed," *i.e.*, not in any case to consecrate a bishop for the English non-jurors. But two of these bishops, Kilgour and Rose, agreed not to do so on this occasion, which was, in truth, the only occasion on which they were ever likely to be asked, as "the sinking remnant" had sunk so far and so fast.

Bishop Kilgour did not think the church, which was itself "in danger of sinking for want of proper clergymen," could spare a "fit man." Bishop Petrie had ascertained that Mr. Brown of Montrose "would be willing to go," and him he believed to be "a proper enough person." Mr. Brown was the clergyman who, a few years later, accepted consecration from the single, superannuated, and "doited" Bishop Rose, in order to continue the non-juring succession in Scotland after all the other clergy had submitted. The church *could* have spared him.

Bishop Petrie, while acquiescing in the refusal of his colleagues, desired them to put their refusal to their English brethren in as mild a form as possible. "If you and Bishop Rose," he wrote to the primus, "persist in thinking yourselves not at liberty to say to them, 'We hope to be able to send them a Bishop,' yet I hope ye will not think that there can be any hurt in saying that 'We wish to send them a Bishop, and will use our best endeavours for that purpose.'" What made Bishop Petrie so zealous was doubtless the fact, that he knew so well what the Scotch non-jurors had done for the English in the past. He had in his possession the historical documents—"the original letters of consecration," which proved that "the Bishops of Scotland" had "consecrated, and assisted in consecrating, not only one, but several Bishops for the Non-jurors in England." One bishop (Doughty) was consecrated in Edinburgh, by four Scotch bishops, March 30th, 1725.*

* Bishop Petrie's well-attested instances are important. "Bishops Campbell and Gadderar went to London, and, together with Bishop

There can be little doubt that but for the firm stand taken by Bishop Skinner, the zealous Petrie would, on this occasion, have carried with him the sympathetic Kilgour and Rose, and thus have blasted the promising prospect of "a cessation of hostilities."

Bishop for America.

Happily the three Aberdeenshire bishops were fully agreed at this time (autumn of 1783) as to the other projected consecration, and from this time they cordially co-operated in accomplishing it. With the two southern bishops, Falconer and Rose, it was different. So far as can be judged by their letters, instead of helping forward the good work, they discouraged it—either flatly refusing their countenance and support, or carping and cavilling at trifles. When, in the autumn of 1783, the proposed consecration was first brought before them, Bishop Falconer returned a surly and impatient refusal to have "any concern with that proposal." Bishop Rose said he "had no objection to lay his hands upon this American doctor but one," namely,

Hickes, consecrated Messrs. Collier, Spinkes, and Hawels, in Bishop Hickes' Chapel, June 3, 1713. These three also consecrated Bishop Gaudy, on St. Paul's Day, 1716, and March 30, 1725, Bishop Doughty was consecrated by Bishop Fullerton of Edinburgh, and Bishops Millar, Irvine, and Freebairn, in the said Bishop of Edinburgh's Chapel. This can be fully attested from the original letters of consecration, presently [at present] in my possession. Extracts from the preambles of two of them are herewith sent, as they show in what light these worthy men considered things." (Letter of December 27, 1783.) The last of the Edinburgh consecrations is the one which was thoroughly in point, having been performed in Scotland, and all the consecrators being Scotch.

"that of his having got his Orders from the Schismatical Church of England." The hyper-Jacobitical bishop said he presumed this objection "would be easily got the better of." It will be seen that he never seems to have done so. The whole task fell on the three Aberdeen prelates.

NOTE TO CHAP. II.

THE reader will find most of the letters from which extracts are made in the above summary of the preliminary stages of the Seabury consecration, in the first volume of the "Scottish Church Review" (Aberdeen, 1884), in articles contributed respectively by the Rev. John Skinner Wilson (p. 31, *seq.*), and by the Very Reverend Dean Nicolson (p. 384, *seq.*). When the actual consecration draws near, Dr. Beardsley prints, *in extenso*, almost every known letter and document.

CHAPTER III.

1784.

Dr. Seabury applies for Consecration—His application granted—Bishop Skinner draws up Concordat between two Churches — Bishop Rose declines to take part in Consecration—Dr. Seabury arrives in Aberdeen—*Caveat* from America against his Consecration—Seabury unmoved by this attempt—Bishop Skinner disregards it, and reassures Bishop Kilgour—Consecration in Longacre Chapel—Alexander Jolly—John Skinner, Senior—Effects of Consecration—England—America—Scotland—Bishop Skinner himself.

Dr. Seabury's Personal Application.

AFTER waiting more than a year in London without obtaining any assurance that even the delay of another year would secure the accomplishment of his object, Dr. Seabury at last made up his mind to try Scotland. Even now, however, he did not write to the Scotch bishops directly, but through an American friend, Dr. Myles Cooper, who, at that time, was doing duty in Edinburgh. His letter (London, August 31st, 1784) to Dr. Cooper, the latter transmitted to Bishop Kilgour on September 13th. The bishops did not much like this indirect mode of application, but the tone of the letter was so satisfactory as to cause them to overlook any seeming dis-

courtesy. Dr. Seabury said that, "if they," "the good Bishops of Scotland," "consent to impart the Episcopal succession to the Church of Connecticut, they will, I think, do a good work, and the blessings of thousands will attend them. And perhaps for this cause among others, God's Providence has supported them, and continued their succession under various and great difficulties—that a free, valid, and purely ecclesiastical Episcopacy may, from them, pass into the Western World."

Application Granted.

Within a fortnight after the receipt of the application (October 2), the primus transmitted to Dr. Seabury, through the Rev. John Allan, Edinburgh, an intimation of the willingness of himself and his colleagues to "clothe him with the Episcopal character," and fixed on Aberdeen as the place of consecration. The intimation reached Seabury, and "made" him "happy," on October 11; and three days afterwards he wrote the primus a letter of thankful acknowledgment, in which he said—"As far as I am concerned, or my influence shall extend, nothing shall be omitted to establish the most liberal intercourse and union between the Episcopal Church in Scotland and in Connecticut; so that the members of both may freely communicate together in all the offices of religion, on Catholic and primitive principles; nor have I any doubt of the hearty concurrence of the clergy of Connecticut in so good a work."

Concordat between the two Churches.

As soon as the consecration was agreed upon, the primus wrote to Bishop Skinner (October 2, 1784), asking him to draw up a concordat, or "bond of union" between their church and that of Connecticut, to "hold communion on the most primitive and Catholic principles," to be signed by themselves and by Dr. Seabury; and a letter of the same tenor to the clergy of Connecticut. He enclosed, for the bishop's guidance in preparing these documents, a copy of a "Declaration," the original of which, and of a concordat to which it referred, he said, he would probably obtain from Bishop Petrie.

These documents doubtless belonged to the class of eirenical agreements to which recourse was found necessary during the internecine struggles between the collegers and usagers previous to 1732. As to the terms of the concordat, the primus made only one suggestion—a very wise one—which was doubtless as acceptable to Bishop Skinner, as it was unpalatable to Bishop Rose. "If we say anything at all of the Church of England," he wrote, "I do not think it would be proper to insist upon him and his clergy having no farther connexion with them, nor to give up their eucharistic service, but only recommend our own as more proper and primitive." *

* The older race of Scottish Bishops still regarded the Church of England as "schismatical," and not fit to be communicated with. Bishop Kilgour here exhibits a wise moderation, partly, no doubt, the result of Bishop Skinner's arguments; but even Bishop Skinner found it necessary to speak with caution on the subject.

Bishop Skinner did not lose a day in carrying out the wishes of the primus. For, two days after the date of the latter's letter (October 4), Bishop Petrie wrote from Folla to Mr. Jolly, Turriff, stating that he had a letter on the previous day from Bishop Skinner, requesting him to send, or still better to bring with him to Aberdeen, any such papers as he might possess, that would be serviceable for the drawing up of the concordat. By a subsequent letter of Petrie's to Jolly (19th S. after Trinity, October 10th, 1784), it appears that the former went to Aberdeen, and "spent," as he was invited to do, "a day with him (Bishop Skinner) at Berrybank"—a house on the north side of Aberdeen, near the Kittybrewster Station, to which the bishop had now removed from Longacre. "Things were as agreeable at Aberdeen as could be expected." The three Aberdeenshire bishops were now at one as to the consecration; "but," said Bishop Petrie, "Bishop Rose is still starting difficulties with regard to Dr. Seabury, which we all thought, and which I still think, ought not to come into question." The difficulties doubtless still arose from the taint that Seabury derived from "the Schismatical Church of England." The good work now went on under Bishop Skinner's hands in spite of all difficulties. On October 23rd, Bishop Petrie again wrote Mr. Jolly that he had that morning received from Bishop Skinner scroll copies of the concordat and letter to the Bishop of Connecticut. Of these documents he "thought well." There were, he said, "some expressions" in both which he supposed "Bishop Rose and others would wish to be altered," but, "under the divine direction and blessing," this

might be "easily done to the satisfaction of all concerned." It must now, however, have become clear to the Aberdeenshire bishops, that for help in the work of consecration, they must rely on themselves alone. And, as they formed but the bare canonical number, the failure of one might, at the critical time, cause the failure of the scheme. Bishop Petrie, therefore, the frailest of the three men, made an urgent appeal to Bishop Rose, now the only surviving southern bishop, and "pressed his taking a chaise and coming the length of Aberdeen."* The primus also, somewhat later, in sending Bishop Rose a copy of the concordat and letter, pressed him, by all the arguments he could suggest, to concur and come to Aberdeen." Both appeals were vain, but the work went on.

Arrival of the Bishop-elect.

Dr. Seabury, however, arrived in Aberdeen a week earlier, viz., on Friday, November 5th. He called on Bishop Skinner next morning, and he appears to have lived with the bishop most of the time he was in Aberdeen. His early arrival, and his free interchange of thought with the penetrating Aberdeen prelate, had the best effect. Thereby a fresh stumbling-block, unexpectedly cast in his path at the eleventh hour, was at once removed.

* Dr. Seabury wrote that he would be in Aberdeen on November 10th; and it was arranged that the Bishops should meet in Aberdeen "on Friday 12th, in the evening, settle matters with Dr. Seabury on the Saturday, and have the consecration on Sunday." (Bishop Petrie to Rev. A. Jolly, October 30, 1784).

Caveat from America.

Just as the doctor arrived in Aberdeen to be consecrated, the primus received from London an urgent warning against consecrating him. It came through a London friend of the primus's, Mr. William Seller, from an American clergyman, who professed himself "the bosom friend" of the primus's "cousin," Dr. William Smith, President of Washington College, Maryland. The writer urged three reasons against the contemplated consecration—

1. It would be "against the earnest advice of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York."

2. Dr. Seabury, having been "actively and deeply engaged against Congress," would "render Episcopacy suspected there" (in America).

3. The consecration of Seabury by the Scotch bishops would "frustrate" all the designs of "my bosom friend, your cousin, Dr. Smith," whom the writer expected in London "after the autumn meeting of the American clergy, with recommendations from the States of America, to be consecrated a bishop." Such a letter, coming at the eleventh hour, greatly troubled the aged primus. He forwarded it to Bishop Skinner on November 6th, the very day on which Dr. Seabury first called on the bishop, saying that he did not "know what to make of it," but rather suspecting that it was "a manœuvre to answer some view of Dr. Smith, who has the character of a very ambitious, designing man." Bishop Skinner answered the primus on November 8th, with a decision and confidence

which, doubtless, set the good man's mind wholly at rest, and effectually quashed this unworthy attempt to thwart the good work.

Dr. Seabury unmoved by the Letter.

Dr. Seabury was with the bishop when the letter came to hand. He had already, indeed, been with him long enough to enable the bishop to "sound" him as to "all the various topics relative to the object of his journey." Their talk had included a "canvass" of "the character and views" of Dr. Smith. The bishop had been impressed with the doctor's "candour and openness;" and, in the circumstances, he could only too easily account for the opposition of his opponents on either side of the Atlantic. His favourable impressions were strengthened by the cool manner in which the doctor received the intimation of this anonymous attack. "He seemed to receive the intimation with great composure, and with very little surprise, after he found that it proceeded from a partisan of Dr. Smith's, whose character and views we had been canvassing before in talking of American matters. 'Tis seldom that anonymous information deserves much regard; but this which you have received appears with such evident marks of envy and malice, as entitle it to nothing but contempt. . . . As to the personal reflections which Mr. Seller's letter casts upon Dr. Seabury, when you once have seen but as much of him as I have done, I make no doubt of your agreeing with me, that they are ill-founded and malicious, and serve only to place his character in a more amiable light, when

contrasted with that of his unworthy rival (for his rival he seems to be) Dr. Smith : a man of no principle, honour, or integrity." Here the good bishop was rather hard on Dr. Smith, whose too obvious desire to become a bishop not only defeated its own object, but also raised an unjust prejudice against him. He lived to redeem his character, and befriend Dr. Seabury, and also to forward the cause which Seabury and Skinner had equally at heart, viz., the assimilation of the communion offices of the two churches.

As to the opposition of the two archbishops, the bishop made light of it. " That Dr. Seabury has come here against the advice of the two Primates of England, he openly acknowledges, and freely delivers their whole conversation with him on the subject ; his part of which, when you hear, I am sure you will be delighted with it. But their *apparent* opposition is no more than what was to be expected ; since the same state connexion and restraint which hindered them from gratifying the wishes of the Connecticut clergy, would equally operate against their approbation of an interference in that affair. . . . From all I can discover," he added, " I am convinced that Dr. Seabury stands high in the esteem of both the archbishops, and though they dare not openly approve, that they have not the most distant thought of resenting the step he is now taking ; so that we may still safely rely on Dr. Berkeley's representation of that matter." The bishop concluded with a forcible statement of his own conviction of the worthiness and fitness of Dr. Seabury, and an earnest recommendation to proceed with the work of consecration. " If there be truth and candour in

man, I honestly declare I think it is in Dr. Seabury. Our last night's conversation naturally led to speak of his credentials, which he readily produced, and I perused with the most heartfelt satisfaction, to see a man so much admired, esteemed, and loved by his brethren. Would to God we had but a few such men among ourselves, and such unanimity, such cordiality in our elections. In the name of our blessed Master, therefore, let us go on cheerfully with the good work recommended to us."

The Consecration.

The bishops did go on at once. The other two northern bishops had full confidence in Bishop Skinner's judgment and penetration. Without further hesitation, therefore, they came to Aberdeen at the appointed time, and the good work "went on." The consecration took place, as arranged, on Sunday, November 14th, in the large upper room of the house in Longacre, which had, till lately, been the bishop's church and home. There was "a large congregation of both clergy and laity," pervaded by a deep and thrilling interest in the solemnity.

Alexander Jolly.

No one was more deeply moved than the youthful priest of Turriff, the already "venerable and venerated" Alexander Jolly, who had begged permission to be allowed to attend, who now "held the book," and who wrote a fortnight afterwards that even then he was

"scarcely recovered from the pleasing dream-like joy which the late extraordinary occasion had cast him into."

The Elder John Skinner.

John Skinner of Linshart, like other busy pastors, stuck to his home duties on that eventful Sunday, but he afterwards wrote Mr. Jolly, that he began "to wish now that *he* had been there too." The "affair" "opened up to his old eyes" a happy "prospect," and he was thankful and trustful in "that invisible Director" who had preserved him "to have a son assisting to send a bishop to that very country" to which the discharge of his duties had, for "thirty years, exposed him to the risk of being banished as a felon." The elder Skinner had indeed been an ardent promoter of the good work from the first. He could not but rejoice in its accomplishment, especially as his favourite son was a leading actor in it. But it was enough for such a man to be present at the solemnity in spirit. He had worked and prayed for its success in the privacy of his remote parsonage. He could there also thank and praise God for its accomplishment.

The Younger Skinner.

On the day of consecration, as in the long and anxious preparation for it, the chief weight and strain of duty fell on the youthful coadjutor. Almost every arrangement was made by him, and most of the expenses of the meeting were defrayed by him. The service was in his church. He preached the sermon,

which was published, and as will be seen, added not a little to the wholesome sensation caused by the event. He entertained the bishops and clergy in his own house; and, in fact, he left nothing undone to make the important event, in every way, auspicious and successful.

The Effects of the Consecration.

In all his efforts the bishop merely followed his instincts of duty, not looking for "a recompense of reward;" but yet to him, to his church, and to the Anglican church generally, the Seabury consecration brought "an exceeding great reward." Its effects, direct and indirect, but especially indirect, were great and lasting, extending to the whole of the Anglican "Church throughout the world."

England.

In England its chief effect was to break the ice of the hard, stolid Erastianism which had hitherto resisted every attempt to find an opening for the consecration of a colonial bishop. It roused English churchmen to a due sense of responsibility to their daughter churches; and thus, in two years, an act was passed which removed all obstacles to the consecration of a bishop for any Anglican church in any part of the world. Dr. Seabury opened the door of access, and thus became the first of a long line of zealous Anglican prelates who have "gone out into all lands."

America.

In America its direct effect was to give a bishop to one diocese. Indirectly, also, it gave a communion office to every diocese, and to every Anglican church of the great western commonwealth. Further, it made the nascent western church more catholic, more eclectic, and more adaptive—more disposed to select for its services whatever was best and most suitable, from every source that was open to it, and to be ever ready, in accordance with the ever-changing times and circumstances, to select and adapt its services to its needs.

Scotland.

The effect abroad was soon felt at home. The little consecrating church, so long neglected and forgotten, "awoke and found itself," if not "famous," at least notorious—the subject of keen controversy and lively discussion in the London magazines. The general result was to make its existence known to a number of English men and women who had never heard of it before. The particular result was, to make it an object of life-long interest to a small knot of ardent and zealous London churchmen—the Stevenses, the Gaskins, the Bouchers, the Bowdlers, and the Allan Parks, who "would not hold their peace," and "would not rest" until its emancipation was secured, nay, who continued for many years to strive with tongue, and pen, and purse, to promote its complete revival and rehabilitation.

On Bishop Skinner himself the Seabury consecration had the happiest effect. It gave him, at the threshold of his career, a position and a commanding authority as an administrator, which he never lost, and which facilitated greatly the success of the chief measures of his long and eventful administration. It procured him valued friends in England, who never ceased to take an interest in him and his work, and never failed to honour and respect him, and to render him yeoman's service in every time of need. To him alone of the three consecrating prelates was life and opportunity given to reap the reward, and to realise the wide and far-reaching consequences of the act. The others, already frail and feeble, soon passed away, while before him there lay, in the providence of God, thirty-two busy and fruitful years, which witnessed the high success of both his own and Seabury's schemes, and also the steady growth and consolidation of both churches of "The Concordat."

NOTE TO CHAPTER III.

THE SEABURY CENTENARY.

It would probably have very greatly astonished Bishop Skinner and his co-consecrators in "the large upper room" on November 14, 1784, had the veil been lifted from the future, and they had beheld, in vision, what took place in Aberdeen on October 7th, 1884. They would have seen Scottish churchmen from every county of Scotland, and Anglican ecclesiastics "out of every nation under heaven," congregating in the Granite City, in order to commemorate a past event, by solemn services in splendid churches, and elegant banquets and conversaziones in spacious halls; and they would have learned that the much honoured event in question was none other than the simple sacred rite which they

were celebrating in obscurity, and with the plainest and humblest of earthly accessories—in an upper room of a plain dwelling-house, in a narrow lane! The good men would have found it hard to realise the facts, but it would have been no vain vision. The Seabury centenary of 1884 was a great and most imposing demonstration, carried out with rare spirit and enthusiasm, and with all means and appliances, in striking contrast with the accessories of the event commemorated.

ABERDEEN IN 1784 AND IN 1884.

To begin with, the city itself was altogether another city. The Aberdeen of 1884 differs as much from the Aberdeen of 1784 as the latter differed from the Aberdeen which had "ane Marrisch called the Loch," on the west side of the Gallowgate, and "ane gryt bowat" on the Castlehill, for its lighthouse.* It may be safely said, that it had scarcely one of the many elegant streets, handsome churches, and spacious halls that now adorn it. It had very few even fifty years ago. The Episcopalians, instead of two "upper rooms" and one church (St. Paul's), have now six churches, mostly new, and of appropriate architecture.

THE GATHERING.

Further, Aberdeen had ample facilities for the commemoration, and they were turned to good account on the three happy October days. The churchmen, who congregated from all parts, included seventeen bishops—six Scotch, five American, two English, two Irish, and two Colonial, with about two hundred clergy of the second order, and a multitude of lay brethren of all ranks.

SERVICES, ADDRESSES, GIFTS.

On the two first days (October 7th and 8th) there were solemn commemorative services in the churches, chiefly in St. Andrew's, the large church which represents the "large upper room," and which has long been the pro-cathedral of the diocese.

* "Bowat or lamp," or lantern, a word not generally "understanded of the people" in Aberdeen in these days. A Head Court held on the 16th April, 1566, "thocht expedient to mak, prepair, and uphold ane gryt bowat or lamp, quhair the same wes obefoir, on the East gawill of Sanct Ninianis Cheppel, vpone the Castelhill, with thre gryt flammand lychtis"—Rettie's "Aberdeen Fifty Years Ago," p. 4.

The purpose of the "bowat" was that ships coming into the road, or sailing past the coast, "may be the said lamp haue jugement and experiens quhair thai ar to eschew danger.—*Ibid.*

There were addresses—one from the whole American church, and one from the diocese of Connecticut, to the sister Scottish church, with appropriate replies from the Scottish bishops; and there was an exchange of appropriate gifts between Connecticut and Aberdeen—a chalice and paten from Connecticut to Aberdeen, and a pastoral staff from Aberdeen to Connecticut.* There was great propriety in the bestowal of these gifts, for Aberdeen and Connecticut were really the two high contracting parties in 1784; and the gifts were well received. The genial and ever-fluent Bishop Williams, was for once embarassed for a reply, his "eyes" becoming "a fountain of tears."

THE BANQUET, CONFERENCE, CONVERSAZIONE, &c.

The various meetings were, in their way, highly successful: all tended to burn into the minds of the commemorators the ever-seasonable lesson of the event commemorated—the great duty of mutual help and sympathy between Christian men and Christian churches, however widely separated by space, or by worldly position. Everything said and done tended also to draw closer the bonds of union between the different branches of the Anglican communion, and to make the final reunion of all Christian churches seem a less hopeless aspiration.

No statement was so loudly cheered as the declaration of Bishop Whipple of Minnesota, at the great evening meeting of October 8th, that he had joined the Anglican church because he believed it to be "the Church of the Reconciliation." The same idea—that of Count Joseph de Maistre—was also happily expounded and enforced at the Tuesday banquet by Bishop Harold Brown.

THE AMERICAN BISHOPS AND CLERGY.

Naturally, at all meetings the American visitors formed the chief objects of interest and attraction. It was something to be an American, and to have travelled three thousand miles to take part in the commemoration. But it was not to mere adventitious advantages that the American brethren owed their attractiveness. They seemed to be all superior men—men excellent in speech, vigorous in action, and animated by a high and generous spirit. "I like the American Bishops," said a perfervid Aberdonian; "they have so much go in them!"

* Churchmen all through Scotland contributed to the Connecticut Staff, but the happy idea of it originated with the Bishop of Aberdeen, who ordered the staff, and took on himself all the pecuniary risk.

The other American clergy, though less seen and heard, seemed equally deserving of esteem. Most of them had worked hard for the success of the centenary on both sides of the Atlantic ; and several of them had titles to respect as commemorators, for what they had done to perpetuate the name and the happy influence of Dr. Seabury. Dr. Beardsley had written his life. Professor Hart had edited his "Communion Office." Professor Seabury was his great-grandson. The latter had with him his son, a boy of fourteen. The great-great-grandson added an element of interest to the meetings, but he was probably as little gratified with the honours of his great-great-grandfather's consecration centenary, as the boy John Skinner was discomposed by the horrors of his father's prison. It is said that he suffered so much from sea-sickness in crossing the Atlantic, that, in the bitterness of his spirit, he wished that he had "never had a great-great-grandfather !"

THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

The Church of England, some seemed to think, ought to have appeared at the centenary by her representatives "in a white sheet." She could not have sent a more effective and acceptable representative than Bishop Harold Brown, who said what could be said for her in the most graceful and persuasive way. Few who heard him will ever forget the tones in which he said that he did not know how to "apologise for his mother," adding, "The Church of England has been my mother for the last seventy-three years."

BISHOP SKINNER'S REPRESENTATIVE.

Bishop Seabury was represented on the occasion, as has been seen, by his great-great-grandson ; Bishop Skinner was represented by his great-grandson, the Rev. John Skinner Wilson, B.A., the able local secretary of the centenary and the editor of the report. Mr. Wilson had much travail and trouble of spirit in making and carrying out all the multifarious arrangements, but it is not said that he wished he had never had a great-grandfather ! Neither, it may be safely assumed, did the great-grandfather, if present in spirit, wish that he had never had a great-grandson !

CHAPTER IV.

1784-1788.

Labours for Repeal of Disabilities—Obstacles—Jacobitism—No Corporate Action—Old Diocesan Meetings—Objects of same—Clergy petition for their revival—Only meetings of Presbyters, but stepping-stones to Synod—Bishop Skinner always well represented at meetings—Meetings discuss Repeal—Pass six Resolutions on subject—Resolutions well received by the Church—Declaration by Aberdeen clergy—Resignation of Bishop Kilgour—Latin oration by Mr. Skinner, Linshart—First Diocesan Synod of Aberdeen—Death of Prince Charles Edward—Bishop and Synod recommend submission to State—Episcopal Synod decrees the same.

WHILE thus successfully labouring for the church abroad, Bishop Skinner was by no means neglecting the church at home. On the contrary, from the first year of his appointment, he had been doing all that was possible to him in his subordinate position, to prepare the church for the working out of its own emancipation.

Jacobitism.

He had his difficulties both within the church and without. There were churchmen of great weight and influence, who would hear of no concession to the government—no submission, no compromise. Bishop Skinner saw that unless this irreconcilable spirit was

cast out, there was no chance for the church. The state was inexorable, and submission was inevitable; churchmen must be taught to face this fact.

Want of Machinery for Corporate Action.

But to educate the churchmen of the time to the adoption of a wise and practicable policy, was a very difficult thing. There was no machinery for the purpose—no sort of public meetings or councils of any sort, except the Episcopal Synod, whose action, though almost unlimited in theory, was very restricted in fact. Every other stated meeting had fallen into abeyance since the outbreak of the persecution.

Dormant Meetings of the Clergy Revived.

Bishop Skinner's accession to power was signalised by an immediate revival of corporate action, through the resuscitation of the half-yearly meeting of the clergy of the diocese—dormant since 1745. It is nowhere said that this was Bishop Skinner's doing, but there can be no doubt whatever that it was so. The fact can be clearly read between the lines of the minutes of the early meetings.

It was in the autumn of 1782 that Bishop Skinner was consecrated. In the very next year, it is found that apparently for the first time a minute book was procured for the diocese—a venerable and instructive little volume, which now lies before the writer. The book opens with a short introductory notice, which is signed by "John Skinner, Bishop Coadjutor," and

which explains the way in which the revival of the meetings was brought about. It was through a petition of the clergy to Bishop Kilgour; and, it may be safely assumed, that this was suggested by Bishop Skinner, and probably drawn up by him or his father.

"The clergy of the diocese of Aberdeen . . . humbly represented to the Right Reverend Father-in-God, Mr. Robert Kilgour, their bishop, that in former times, when the church enjoyed repose, it was the constant practice of the clergy to have at least two meetings in the year."

Objects of the Meetings.

The objects for which the meetings were held are stated, but only in the concluding sentence is there any reference to business. They were held "for cultivating brotherly love, strengthening each other in the work of the ministry, receiving the benefit of each other's advice, and transacting such business as was entrusted to them." The meetings were thus largely of the nature of modern clerical associations, but they were more. They did some business—all the public church business that was entrusted to the presbytery in those days. The "practice" of holding the meetings had been "laid aside since 1745, owing to the trouble that arose at that period."

Clergy Petition for Revival of Practice.

The clergy now requested the bishop's sanction for the revival of the practice. The bishop "signified

the same to them, through the Right Reverend Mr. John Skinner, Bishop Coadjutor." At the same time he appointed Mr. Joshua Watson of Blairdaff (afterwards Bishop of Dunkeld) clerk of the meetings, and the meetings began immediately to be regularly held in spring and autumn.

Only "Presbyteries."

This note and the minutes of the eight or nine meetings that were held while Bishop Skinner remained coadjutor, make it clear that it was only a meeting of presbyters that was contemplated. There is no provision for an official president, or indeed for any president at all. The fact that the clerk is authorised to sign the minutes, seems to indicate that the question of president was purposely left open. There is no mention of a bishop or any other dignitary in connection with the meetings; and the minutes show that it was only by accident, as it were, that a bishop was ever present.

The first meeting was held at Ellon, half way between Aberdeen and Peterhead; yet neither the Aberdeen nor the Peterhead bishop attended. The second meeting was held at Linshart, six miles from Bishop Kilgour's house, and in the house of Bishop Skinner's father, yet neither Bishop Kilgour nor Bishop Skinner was present. The third meeting being held in Aberdeen, Bishop Skinner's presence at it was almost a matter of course. The fourth meeting, which was held at Linshart (April 13th, 1785), was the only one that was attended by Bishop Kilgour, and the reason

of his attendance was that there was important episcopal work to be done on the occasion, viz., the promotion of three deacons to the priesthood—a reason quite sufficient to account for the presence of both principal and coadjutor.

The Meeting a Stepping-stone to the Synod.

It is very probable that Bishop Skinner was as well satisfied for the time with this half measure, as he would have been with the establishment of a regular diocesan synod. There was little risk of the "Presbytery" causing misunderstandings between the principal and the coadjutor. The synod might. It would have almost necessitated the regular attendance and presidency of one of the bishops. The old and frail Kilgour would not have attended, at least with any regularity; and he might have disliked the frequent appearance of his coadjutor at the head of the clergy in council. There can be no doubt that it was a feeling of delicacy towards his principal, that dictated Bishop Skinner's absence from the ordinary meetings of the clergy, which were not held in Aberdeen.

Bishop Skinner well Represented at the Meetings.

Whether personally present or absent, Bishop Skinner was always well represented at the meetings. His father, who constantly went hand-in-hand with him in policy, was always present, and, in fact, he was the leading clergyman, both by ability and by standing, and was also probably dean of the diocese during

most of the time. His name stands always first in the list of members present at the meetings, and he probably always occupied the chair. Anyhow, he was an able and fluent exponent of his son's policy ; and his son's great aim at this time was to pave the way for repeal of the penal laws.

Meetings Discuss Repeal.

The subject of repeal was discussed at the earlier meetings of the clergy ; but nothing was minuted on the subject till the sixth meeting (Linshart, May 3rd, 1786). The minute of that meeting is the first that enters into any particulars. It states that the question "had, at former meetings, given rise to much conversation among the clergy, but without" any practical result. They now grappled with it in earnest, and brought it to an issue. "A motion was made, that the presbyters and deacons do proceed to take the same into their most serious consideration." They did so take it ; and the result was that they came to six wise and sound resolutions, which they determined, with a view to united action, to circulate through the other dioceses of the church.

Resolutions.

The principles (I. and II.) began by stating very correctly and forcibly the church's true "attitude towards" the civil power, and towards political parties, which, in those days, usually meant *dynastic* parties. Spiritually, the church was "independent of the authority and sanction of all civil powers," and it maintained

a neutral attitude towards all political parties." These were, no doubt, the principles of the two non-Jacobitical Skinners, and probably also those of most of the younger clergy of the time ; and it was very right and fit that at that time an authoritative testimony should be lifted up in favour of them. The clergy, however, were not satisfied with avowing the principles ; they went further, and maintained that the church had always acted in accordance with the principles. The church could not "admit of those political attachments that had been attributed to her ; and she had never made the profession of any particular political principles, or adherence to any particular party a term of communion." Here the clergy were arguing from the church's principles to the church's history, and assuming that what should have been had been. Whatever the principles were, however, the practice had been very different.

Instances of Jacobitism as Term of Communion.

John Skinner, senior, knew well, from bitter experience, that Jacobitism had been made "a term of communion," when he, for praying for King George, was called upon to "repent," and be "absolved by his Bishop, Mr. Gerrard." Mr. Ramsay of Stonehaven found it a very rigid "term of communion," when he, for the same offence, was ousted from his church. It must be remembered, however, that the Aberdeen clergy were not teaching history, but laying down principles, and that they were not addressing the general public, but their own clerical brethren in other dioceses. What they

doubtless meant here to impress upon their brethren was, that if their predecessors had been Jacobites, it was not in consequence, but in spite, of their church's principles. It was, in fact, the views and opinions of the then existing race of clergy that was the great practical question. If these men were not Jacobites, they had a right to be relieved from the penalties of Jacobitism.

The remaining resolutions were entirely practical and wholly unobjectionable.

Nos. III. and IV. set forth the evils of the penal laws.

No. V. indicated the indispensable first step towards the attainment of repeal—"That the repeal of these laws is not to be expected, without making such a declaration of the principles of this Church as may convince those in power of the propriety of such repeal, and therefore the clergy should, as soon as possible, come to a resolution in regard to the nature of such declaration."

No. VI. "That the clergy of the Church be invited to concur with the clergy of the diocese of Aberdeen in a humble representation to the Bishops of the matter above mentioned."

The clerk, Mr. Roger Aitken, was instructed to forward a copy of these resolutions to "the clergy of the other districts of the Church," with a request that they should forward to him their opinions in regard to the same, "betwixt and the first of August next."

Resolutions well Received.

At next meeting, held at Aberdeen, August 3rd, 1786, the clerk reported that he had received answers from the clergy "of all the districts," with the exception of "Mr. Gleig of Pittenweem, for the district of Fife." Mr. Gleig's neglect of a communication from Aberdeen was, as will be seen, by no means unnatural at this time. The answers received were, however, satisfactory. The sense of the greater part of them appeared to be, that a declaration, in terms of the fifth resolution, should be made out by the clergy of the diocese of Aberdeen, and transmitted to them for their consideration."

Declaration by Aberdeen Clergy.

The Aberdeen clergy were prepared to act on this recommendation at once. At once "the draught of a declaration," which, as is known, had been drawn up by Mr. Skinner, senior, "was produced, and read over to the meeting." A second time it was read over, "paragraph by paragraph," and discussed, "and corrected and amended to the satisfaction of all the clergy." Thereafter, to make sure of complete accuracy and unanimity, it was resolved to have a clean copy prepared for careful consideration at an adjourned meeting of the clergy on the following day.

Next day, August 4th, the corrected copy of the declaration was read over to the assembled clergy, unanimously agreed to, and signed by the whole of them.

The clerk was then instructed to forward a copy of the declaration to the clergy of each of "the other districts," requesting that "they return the same to him, with their opinions thereof, that it might be laid before the Bishops as soon as possible."

Resignation of Bishop Kilgour.

Thus a first great step was taken towards the attainment of repeal, and the time was come when Bishop Skinner could take a more direct and authoritative part in the deliberations of the clergy. The next meeting of the clergy (Linshart, April 25th, 1787) was the last meeting in the old form—the last "presbytery." Since last meeting, "the Right Reverend Mr. Robert Kilgour, Bishop of Aberdeen," had "signified to the clergy," by a circular letter, his intention of resigning the charge of the diocese into the hands of the Right Reverend Bishop Skinner, who had formerly been elected his coadjutor and successor." The clergy agreed upon a suitable address to Bishop Kilgour on his resignation. Then Bishop Skinner at once took his proper place at the head of the clergy.

Aberdeen Declaration not Approved.

He informed them that the declaration agreed upon at the previous meeting had been sent to "the clergy of the other districts," and they "had transmitted to him their opinions of it." The opinions were not favourable. Probably no declaration, that would have satisfied the government, would have been acceptable to the majority of the clergy of the other dioceses at

this stage of the movement. Certain other obstacles had arisen—"some unexpected circumstances" had occurred since the declaration had been agreed to. In the circumstances, therefore, "the meeting were of opinion, that to carry the matter further at present, would be unseasonable." The way was to be paved "by all proper means" for repeal, but no "immediate step" was to be taken.

Mr. Skinner's Latin Oration.

Meantime, at the request of the bishop, Mr. Skinner, senior, produced and read to the meeting "a Latin oration on the same subject as the declaration," which as giving "a clear and comprehensive view of the state of the church, without entering into any specific plan for relief," was approved and ordered to be published, as being likely to do good.

It may seem strange that Mr. Skinner should have written, and the clergy should have published, an "oration" on this to them most important question, in Latin, and not in English. The intention doubtless was to insure that, as far as possible, the circulation and perusal of the speech should be confined to friendly readers—that is to the clergy, and the influential friends of the church, in both ends of the island.

First Diocesan Synod.

The next meeting held at Aberdeen (August 22nd, 1787) is headed "1st Diocesan Synod." After certain preliminaries, "the Bishop authorised and declared the meeting to be a Diocesan Synod—having given the

clergy satisfactory reasons for altering the former mode and title, and reducing the meetings of the clergy to a form more consistent with Episcopal government."

The minutes of former meetings had been signed only by the clerk, or clerks. That of this meeting was signed first by "John Skinner, Bp."

Death of Prince Charles.

Before the meeting of the next synod (April 9th, 1788), an important event had occurred — a great obstacle in the path of the church emancipators had been removed, by the demise of Prince Charles Edward (January 31st, 1788). The bishop, of course, referred to this Jacobitically important event, and desired to have the opinion of the clergy "whether, in the present state of things, compliance might not be made with the established government." The clergy proved to be quite at one with the Bishop in this matter. They "entered deeply into" it, and came to the very sensible conclusion that "as there appeared to be no claim to the Crown of Britain more valid than that of the Prince now in possession of it, they were so satisfied as to think themselves at liberty to pray by name for him and the royal family." They drew up a statement of their opinions, to be laid before a "National" or episcopal synod, that was to be held at Aberdeen on the 24th of the same month.

The Bishops Decree Compliance.

At their meeting on August 24, 1788, the bishops came to the same conclusion as the Aberdeen synod.

They "unanimously agreed to comply with, and submit to, the present government," and they published an intimation to that effect "to the clergy and laity," requiring "their clergy" to notify their people on May 18th, that "on the following Lord's day, nominal prayers for the King would be introduced."

This order was complied with by the whole of the clergy, with the exception of Mr. Brown of Montrose, who, with the countenance of the superannuated Bishop Rose of Dunblane, made a feeble attempt to perpetuate the non-juring succession—so feeble indeed as merely to accentuate the general concurrence of the clergy. Thus the great internal obstacle to emancipation—the obstacle of a hundred years—was at last happily, though not perhaps very logically, surmounted. The first and indispensable step was taken towards an arrangement with the Government. And no time was lost in turning it to account. The Aberdeen clergy were prepared to back up the bishops in appealing to government. At their next synod (August, 1788), they declared themselves ready to support the bishops "to the utmost of their power . . . in any proper measures," for the repeal of the penal laws.

CHAPTER V.

1784-1788 *(Continued).*

First Attempts to obtain Relief Bill—English and Anglo-American Friends—Dr. Chandler—The Bishop Publishes his Seabury Consecration Sermon—Remonstrance by English Dignitary—Not without some cause—Mr. Gleig Reviews Sermon in "Gentleman's Magazine"—Effects of this Review—The Bishop and Mr. Gleig counterwork each other—Each exaggerates the other's Counter-influence—No Bill possible at this stage.

First Attempts at Repeal.

THE first step had now been taken for the repeal of the penal laws—the moving of the church; and, as will be seen, Bishop Skinner did not long delay the taking of a second. But before this time, he and others had tried hard to take the second step first—that is, to move the state before the church would move. Of these futile attempts, some account must now be given. They had been going on since the consecration of Bishop Seabury, that event having brought the bishop and his church not a few invaluable friends.

English and Anglo-American Friends.

Bishop Skinner's name had become a household word amongst the English friends of the American

church, and they were friends indeed. They had learning, ability, and zeal, and they vied with each other in their eagerness to honour and serve him. He had only to write for information or help to one of them, and straightway the resources of the whole were in requisition. If one could not answer, he applied to another, and, if need was, to a third or a fourth, till the request was complied with.

Dr. Chandler.

Being anxious to know if Bishop Seabury had arrived in safety in his diocese, Bishop Skinner wrote (April 1, 1785), for information on the subject, to Dr. Chandler, bishop-elect of Nova Scotia.

Dr. Chandler had, like Seabury, come to London for consecration two years before this time. He was now tired of waiting, finding, as he said, his object "in no greater forwardness" then than it had been a year before. He was, besides, compelled, by a "scorbutic corrosive disorder," to take a voyage across the Atlantic, to visit his family, "consisting of a most excellent wife and three amiable daughters." He therefore advised the bishop, in his absence, to "adopt, as his correspondent, the Rev. Mr. Boucher of Paddington, a loyal clergyman of Maryland, the worthiest of the worthy, and one of the most confidential friends of Bishop Seabury." The bishop accordingly wrote to Mr. Boucher (June 25, 1785); but again there was a case of absence, and a handing on of the episcopal correspondent from friend to friend. Mr. Boucher had "just left to go on a long tour into Germany and France," from which he did not return till the end of

October. The bishop's letter had, however, been handed to that excellent friend of all Anglican churches, Mr. William Stevens, "the friend of all" the bishop's "friends," who reported (mistakenly it would seem) that he had acquainted the bishop with the doctor's absence. Mr. Boucher, however, wrote the bishop (December 6th, 1785), giving him a very gratifying account of Bishop Seabury's safe arrival and cordial reception in America. This was the beginning of a long and friendly, and very fruitful correspondence.

Publishes his Consecration Sermon.

Meantime the bishop's action in the Seabury matter contributed, in indirect ways, and by defect as well as by merit, to enhance the effect of that interesting event. He published the consecration sermon without his name, as was usual in those troublous times; and this seemingly harmless production produced, first and last, no little turmoil amongst friends and foes. As might have been expected, the sermon was very outspoken on the subject of the occasion—putting, in the strongest way, the duty of every church to do, when called upon, that which, in the Seabury case, the little non-juring church had done. "The successors of the Apostles" were obliged to do so, "by the commission which they held. . . . No connexion with any State, nor dependence on any Government whatever, should tie up their hands," &c. The bishop supported his teaching on this point by quotations (in a note) from the works of some English clergymen—Dean Sherlock of St. Paul's, and Mr. Reeves. The

quotation from the latter writer concluded with the words, "Certain it is that there is no omnipotence in Parliaments, and that the gospel is not repealable by the civil powers." To this passage the bishop appended the words, "Many thanks to Mr. Reeves for this strong and sensible vindication of the clergy of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, who have ventured for a long time to show more regard to the Acts of the Apostles than to the Acts of the British Parliament." This last remark was not in the bishop's usual dignified style, but his whole reasoning was cogent enough as a defence of the little church that consecrated; but, from the connexion, it could hardly fail to be regarded as an attack upon the great church that did not consecrate.

Remonstrance by an English Dignitary.

Of this fact the bishop soon obtained proofs, which could not but command his respect. A dignified and friendly remonstrance on the subject was sent to Primus Kilgour (June 9th, 1785), by a dignitary who signed himself "A Dignified Clergyman of the Church of England;" and who was believed at the time, and apparently on good grounds, to be none other than the learned Bishop Lowth of London, who died two years afterwards. The whole tone of the letter made manifest the writer's deep sympathy with the persecuted little church, and his high satisfaction at its action in the Seabury matter. "The consecration of Bishop Seabury by the Scotch bishops gave much pleasure to many of the most dignified and respectable amongst

the English clergy, and to none more than to" himself. "Full of the greatness of the occasion, he sent for the sermon," immediately on seeing it advertised. He "perused it with a mixture of satisfaction and deep concern. Much of it met his entire assent;" but there were "some passages which he wished it had not contained, and which he could not help thinking it injudicious to publish." This was not his own opinion only, but also that "of several of his brethren well affected to the Episcopal Church of Scotland." "Many," he said, "think they perceive the Church of England treated with contempt for not consecrating Dr. Seabury at every risk."

"The Church of England," the writer continued, "looks on her sister in Scotland with a pitying eye," wishing "for a repeal of those laws under which she now suffers. . . . I have good reason," he further added, "to believe, that there is some intention formed of endeavouring to do her some service, at a convenient season. . . . Who the writer" was, the primus might "possibly hereafter learn." He never did learn, however, and the reason doubtless was—if Bishop Lowth was the writer, that that eminent prelate died on November 3rd, 1787, before probably he could find "a convenient season" for making himself known.

Remonstrance not without some Cause.

It must be admitted that the "Dignified Clergyman" remonstrated with dignity, and not without cause. Bishop Skinner seemed to feel that he owed him an apology, but as the dignitary never made

himself known, no opportunity was given for offering it. It is very likely that the "Dignified Clergyman" laid too much stress on the bishop's not very dignified or serious words. Probably by his play upon "the Acts," the bishop meant no more than that the English bishops "showed" too much "regard" for acts of parliament—a charge which, if true, was, in the circumstances, only too natural, and not particularly reprehensible. But from the connexion, the words could hardly fail to imply a great deal more—nothing less, in fact, than that the English bishops showed more regard to the acts of the British parliament than they did to the Acts of the Apostles. This was a very serious charge indeed, and one to which, in the Seabury matter, the leading English bishops were certainly not amenable. These prelates did not urge the parliamentary obstacle as a ground of refusal to consecrate Seabury, but only as a plea for delay, till the obstacle could be removed. And, meantime, they laboured to secure its removal. It might perhaps, therefore, be said, with truth, that they did not display sufficient zeal and energy in doing their duty to Seabury, but not that they neglected their duty through an erastian compliance with state policy. They did not show more regard to the acts of the British parliament than to the Acts of the Apostles, but they strove, however ineffectually for a time, to show due regard to both.

The English bishops, therefore, had some excuse for their indignation, but they wisely sought vindication in deeds rather than in words. They continued their exertions to obtain from parliament the necessary

powers, and succeeding, after the lapse of two more years, they at last (February 4th, 1787) consecrated two bishops for America. Three years afterwards (September 19th, 1790) they consecrated a third. These three prelates, Drs. White, Provost, and Madison, united with Bishop Seabury (September 17th, 1792) in consecrating a fifth bishop (Dr. Claggett), and, from that time, the blended Scotch and English succession has been continued "in unbroken line." It cannot be doubted that the English bishops would, in time, have consecrated bishops for America though their Scotch brethren had not set them the example. But that example was nevertheless not lost upon them. It made them act sooner than they would otherwise have done, and it roused them to a livelier sense of their duty to the headless Anglican churches throughout the world. Thus the offence given to those without his church, by the bishop in his consecration sermon, and the consequent attacks upon him, did little, if any, permanent harm. The effect of the attack that was made upon him from within was very different.

Review of the Sermon by Mr. Gleig.

The attack on the consecration sermon, by a brother clergyman, was much less reasonable and less justifiable than that of the English dignitary. In fact, it was almost wholly without excuse. In the March number of the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1785, the Rev. George Gleig of Crail and Pittenweem (afterwards bishop and primus), began a controversy on the subject of the Seabury consecration with a correspondent of

that magazine, who signed himself "L. L.," and who, on the subject of bishops and bishop-making, was a most thorough-going erastian. Mr. Gleig disposed of "L. L.'s" arguments with his usual ability; but, like the elephant in battle, he, in his onset, trode down both friends and foes. On the whole, he defended the matter of the bishop's consecration sermon, but he was caustically severe on the manner. It was, he asserted, "so miserably deficient" in "unity of subject, and perspicuity of style," that he could only "hazard a probable conjecture" as to what its "main doctrines" were. Now, in the first place, this censure was, to say the least of it, exaggerated. The sermon was, no doubt, like most of the busy bishop's writings, too lengthy and discursive, deficient also in arrangement and compression. Nobody was probably more aware of these defects than the right reverend author himself. The "main doctrines," however, and the purport of the discourse, were quite unmistakeable.

But, secondly, a criticism of this sort was, in the circumstances, altogether uncalled for. Mr. Gleig was not reviewing the sermon, and need have taken no notice of the style. Nay, in the circumstances, duty, as well as delicacy and propriety, dictated forbearance. The preacher and his critic were two of the ablest of the few able ministers in their little communion—men who, in the natural course of things, would have much to do with each other in church matters, and who would soon, almost to a certainty, be united in closest intimacy and co-operation as brother bishops. For either of two such men to give needless offence to the other, was to sin against "godly union and concord."

It was to raise up between the two a barrier to cordial co-operation which could not but be highly detrimental to the church's best interests. It can hardly be supposed that Mr. Gleig was blind or indifferent to such consequences of his act; and there is probably some ground for the suspicion that he was actuated, on this occasion, by a personal feeling against the bishop—a rankling reminiscence of the latter's somewhat summary, though well-advised, rejection of Dr. Berkeley's recommendation to consecrate Mr. Gleig as a missionary bishop for America.

Effects of this Critique.

Whatever may have been the cause of the criticism, the effect was undoubtedly unfortunate. It gave rise to a long-continued misunderstanding and estrangement between author and critic. It left a slur on the memory of both. It led both to do things which their better judgment must have disapproved, and it hindered their full co-operation in church work for upwards of twenty years to come. Apart altogether from mere personal feeling, it was inevitable that Bishop Skinner should, in consequence of this incident, conceive a strong prejudice against Mr. Gleig, and look upon him as a man of a turbulent temper, whom it was desirable, at all hazards, to keep out of the episcopal college. He therefore did keep him out, though repeatedly elected, by two separate dioceses, for other twenty-two years. An opportunity for rejecting him presented itself the very next year. The clergy of Dunkeld elected Mr. Gleig bishop, November

9th, 1786. The episcopal college, however, refused to confirm the election ; and it is expressly stated in the minute book of the diocese of Dunkeld, that their refusal was due to the influence of " Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen," on account of " some expressions " used by Mr. Gleig in "a late publication . . . in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' "—(See " Life of Bishop Gleig," p. 198).

Bishop Skinner on the Misunderstanding.

The fact is substantially acknowledged by Bishop Skinner himself in an unpublished letter to his father (which now lies before the writer). The letter is dated February 9th, 1787, and it is very interesting as exhibiting the unlimited right of veto which was claimed, as a matter of course, by the bishops of those times, in the all-important matter of episcopal election. "By the last post from Peterhead " the Bishop writes— " the Primus likewise sent me a letter for Pittenweem [for Mr. Gleig], left open for my inspection, wherein he entreated the Dunkeld Elect not to intimate his Resignation of that Election any farther, as he hoped it might still be brought forward, and all the misunderstanding between the Elect and me happily removed. With this view he begged him, if possible, to meet me at Dundee, as next week, where, he could assure him, he would find me well-disposed to have everything settled for the Good of the Church. Knowing how much the Primus wishes for peace and quiet, and that he would not like to have written a letter in vain, I thought it proper to forward it as desired. But, as I now find that my visit to Dundee is not likely to hold

so soon as next week, I found it necessary to intimate this to Mr. Gleig, and therefore, to save him postage, took the opportunity of the blank leaf of the Primus's letter to let him know what had been proposed, and how it had been prevented, at the same time taking notice of some mistakes in his letter to me, and [stating] that he had still left me in the dark as to the main point on which I wished to be satisfied. I concluded with assuring him, that could *I* be but *really assured*, as he says, that he would *never* disturb the harmony of the Episcopal College, none of the members would more heartily welcome, and even press, him to enter it, than his humble servant, &c. What effect all this will have upon him I know not, but cannot help fearing that it will not be such as we could wish, and are entitled to expect. I had a letter this day from Bishop Rose, wherein he says he is *very sorry* to hear of Mr. Gleig's being elected for Dunkeld, as on account of his political principles, which are *very bad*, he thinks him a very improper person to be promoted to the Episcopate. Dunblane is well pleased that I am deputed to go to Dundee, and has returned the Deputation properly signed."

Bishop Skinner's Objection.

What the "main point" was, on which the bishop "wished to be satisfied," can only be conjectured. The test which he imposed on Mr. Gleig, when the latter was eventually consecrated in 1808, was the emission of a declaration binding himself to maintain the Scotch office. There is no reason, however, to

suppose that Mr. Gleig would have hesitated to satisfy him on that point, on the present occasion. Further, had the requirement been so distinct and definite as that, Mr. Gleig could hardly have informed the Dunkeld clergy, as he did, that after all the correspondence that had passed between him and the primus on the subject, he "did not even then know" what Bishop Skinner's "objections" really were. Whatever the objection was, it was doubtless something which would not now be considered "canonical," and it was apparently urged only by Bishop Skinner. The primus was anxious to confirm. It is not said that any objection was offered by Bishop Petrie. Bishop Rose seemingly objected only to Mr. Gleig's "politics," no doubt because they were not Jacobitical. The objection was thus undoubtedly something of a private rather than of a public nature—something personally offensive to Bishop Skinner, rather than perilous to the church. At the same time, it is clear that Bishop Skinner believed that Mr. Gleig, if consecrated, "would disturb the harmony of the Episcopal College;" and, according to the theory of election which prevailed at that time, a bishop would consider a conviction of this sort ample ground for refusing to confirm an election.

Part taken by Bishops in Diocesan Elections.

The bishops of that time, in fact, looked on themselves as the real electors, and held themselves entitled to reject a bishop-elect on any ground which would seem sufficient to a diocesan elector. The times were changing, however, and this summary rejection of

Mr. Gleig was not well received by the church. When it was repeated again and again, it came to be regarded more and more as a straining of the episcopal authority. It raised a prejudice against Bishop Skinner, especially in the south ; and its effects are probably to be seen in the revolt which took place against his authority, when he next attempted to quash the election of a distinguished candidate.

The Bishop and Mr. Gleig counterwork each other.

The more immediate effects of this untoward incident are doubtless to be traced in the apparent thwarting and counterworking of each other by these two zealous churchmen, in their respective attempts to promote the repeal of the penal laws. Each had influential friends in London, and both were, at this time, feeling their way towards a relief bill. Mr. Gleig paid a visit of some duration to London soon after his rejection for Dunkeld, and was introduced by his friend, Dr. Berkeley, to the "Vice-Dean," the Archbishop and Dean of Canterbury. These dignitaries, he says, imparted to him their views as to the sort of relief bill which should be brought forward. "The Archbishop, Dean, and Vice-Dean . . . laid down" to him "a plan" of "a better bill" than that which was eventually obtained. A few months after this, however, Bishop Skinner and his father brought forward a bill which did not contain the indispensable requirement of praying for the king by name ; and this bill their friend, Mr. Boucher of Epsom, who "stood well" with the archbishop, persuaded them that his grace

would "support." Mr. Gleig, with many of the other Scotch clergy, was made acquainted with Bishop Skinner's bill. But to him and to "all the Edinburgh Clergy" it appeared "in the highest degree extravagant, and fraught with the utmost danger to the Church." Mr. Gleig communicated the plan of the bill to his friend, Dr. Berkeley, and asked him to "learn," either personally, or through the dean, or Dr. Horne, "*cautiously* from the Archbishop, whether he would support such a measure, should it ever be attempted to be carried into effect. The consequence was, that the Archbishop severely reproved Mr. Boucher for coupling his name with so absurd a project." Then Mr. Gleig believed that either the archbishop, or some one else "to whom the extravagant scheme had been communicated," had told it to Lord Thurlow, and thus raised in the all-potent Chancellor's mind a prejudice against any relief bill. In short, Mr. Gleig believed that Bishop Skinner's impracticable bill had not only wrecked his own promising bill, but also cast fresh and serious obstacles in the parliamentary path of any possible relief bill. On the other hand, Bishop Skinner and his friends evidently believed that Mr. Gleig had, by his interposition, prejudiced the archbishop's mind against their scheme, and "sacrificed a Bishop of his own Church on the altar of Canterbury." *

* See "Neale's Torry," pp. 17, 18; "Life of Bishop Gleig," p. 201, *seq.*

Both Parties at Fault.

It was unfortunate that these two born leaders, whose only rivalry should have been like that of the two great Greek generals,* "as to which of them should do his" communion "the greater services," did not have a better understanding with each other, so as to avoid even the appearance of counter-working each other. The church, however, suffered less from these cross purposes than either of the parties themselves supposed. Each of them manifestly attached too much importance to his own scheme, and too much weight to the counter-influence of the other.

No Bill possible at that time.

Neither of these bills could have been passed at that time. It is safe to say, now that the whole temper of the times is better known, that no bill, which would have been both satisfactory to the government, and acceptable to the non-jurors of the north, could have been passed before the year 1788. There was sufficient difficulty even after that eventful year. To the last there was a persistent striving, by Jacobitical churchmen, after unattainable compromises. For instance, the clergy of the diocese of Aberdeen, after they had agreed in 1788 to pray for King George by name, wanted permission to do so by another form than that in the English prayer book—a compromise which the episcopal synod believed would "defeat the end in

* Aristides and Themistocles.

view in complying with the Government."* Both state and church required a few years time to prepare for the acceptance of a proper bill. And then, as will be seen in the next chapter, the promoters of bills were apt to be over sanguine beforehand as to their prospects. Experience soon showed them that it was impossible to forecast the fate of a bill till it had been introduced into both houses of parliament.

* Minute of Diocesan Synod of Aberdeen, August 20th, 1788.

CHAPTER VI.

1788-89.

1788 and 1688—Aberdeenshire Jacobites—Bishop Skinner made Primus—Additions to the Episcopal College—Bishops Macfarlane, Strahan, and Abernethy Drummond—Deputation of Bishops to London—Well received by Scotch Peers and M.P.'s—Helped by influential Scotch Presbyterian Ministers—Wait on English Bishops—Bill introduced into Commons—Into Upper House—Lord Thurlow opposes it—His motives—Bishops appeal to him without effect—Unopposed progress of Bill through Commons—Bishops again appeal in vain to Thurlow—Bill thrown out—Thurlow's abnormal influence—Cause of same—Bishops appeal to Warren of Bangor—His answer—Conduct of English Bishops generally—Letter of William Stevens regarding the same.

1788.

THE year 1788, to which the narrative of Primus Skinner's life is now fully brought up, was to that prelate and his church a very notable year. It was the centenary of disestablishment and disendowment—the hundredth year of practical outlawry and crushing depression. Yet this year of bitter memories was by no means a year of despondency and gloom. On the contrary, it was a year of awakened life and hope. The centenary, in fact, brought with it its own best commemoration. The hundredth year opened up to the prisoners of conscience a way of escape which

conscience could accept. It brought them a sort of jubilee-opportunity for throwing open their own prison doors, and striking off their own fetters.

1688 saw the last Stuart king driven from the throne—1788 witnessed the death of the last Stuart that made a fight for the throne. This event, as is clear in a letter of Mr. Gleig's to "The Gentleman's Magazine" (June, 1785), had for years been looked forward to by non-Jacobitical churchmen as the natural and providential solution of the Jacobite difficulty. As has been seen, the Aberdeen synod (chap. iv.) accepted it as such, and held that no other prince had a better claim to the throne than the reigning King George. The stauncher Jacobites "thought scorn" of this plea. Henry of York was Charles's brother, and though a Roman priest and a cardinal, he was still the legitimate heir to the throne. "Though Henry IX.," said Oliphant of Gask, were "Mahumetan and a Turkish priest, he would still be our king." The logic of the matter doubtless lay with these irreconcilables.

Aberdeenshire Jacobites.

Bishop Skinner's own diocese contained some of the most unbending of these outstanding Jacobites, and these men did not fail to lift up, at this time, their testimony against him and his policy. That hard-juring non-juror Halket of Inveramsay, sprang to his feet when the clergyman began to pray for King George, in Meiklefolla church, vowing that *he* "would never pray for that Hanoverian scoundrel." He immediately left the church, and (as the writer heard from

his own father) he did not re-enter it for twenty years. The bishop's own congregation in Aberdeen comprised some equally resolute, though less demonstrative, Jacobites. One (Mr. Rogers) said, that in praying for King George, the bishop might "pray the knees off his breeches" before *he* would join with him. Not a few churchmen continued for a time to "pray backwards,"* drowning the clergyman's words in distracting noises, coughing, shuffling with their feet, slamming their books, and so forth. But this was a mere temporary ebullition. Bishop Skinner lived to visit old Halket at Inveramsay, when juring and non-juring were alike forgotten; and the bishop saw the laird break his shins on a "firlot" without any unseemly outburst. Time was on the side of the compliers. Jacobitism was extinct as a cause, and it soon ceased to be influential as a creed. It could offer no effectual resistance to relief measures, and by the middle of 1788, when all home-obstacles to relief were surmounted, preparations were begun for an early appeal to parliament.

Bishop Skinner made Primus.

Of course, Bishop Skinner came to the front as soon as relief measures were contemplated; but now he had more freedom of action. He obtained the first place in name as well as in fact. The frail and feeble Kilgour resigned the office of primus, and the youthful and vigorous Skinner was chosen in his place.

* "As fast as he prayed God bless him, I prayed Deil swarbit him," as the Aberdeenshire Jacobite said he did when his presbyterian friend prayed for King George—"Conolly's Life of Bishop Low."

The Episcopal College.

The college of bishops, over which he was called to preside, was a much stronger and more efficient body of rulers than the church had possessed for many years. Three appointments had been made in the previous year (1787), viz., Macfarlane of Moray and Ross; Strahan of Brechin; and Abernethy Drummond of Edinburgh. These were not frail and effete prelates, but comparatively youthful and vigorous men.

Bishop Macfarlane.

They were all northern men; but only one of them, Bishop Macfarlane, belonged to the true northern type of the time. Macfarlane had sat at the feet of John Skinner of Linshart, and had imbibed, in all their breadth and fulness, the very decided views of that ardent and lively Hutchinsonian. Bishop Macfarlane was an earnest man, with a perfervid Scotch temperament, and very pronounced likes and dislikes.

Bishop Strahan.

The new bishop of Brechin appears to have been an agreeable, gentlemanly man; but without any other marked characteristics. He had the *suaviter in modo*, but not the *fortiter in re.*

Abernethy Drummond.

The character of the new bishop of Edinburgh was the exact reverse of this. He possessed the *fortiter in*

re, but not the *suaviter in modo*, and the want of grace and gentleness of manner detracted greatly from the practical value of the solid gifts of zeal, learning, and literary talent which he possessed. As proprietor of "caverned Hawthornden," Bishop Drummond enjoyed ample worldly means, and these he liberally shared with his less fortunate brethren throughout the church, especially in his native north.

Deputation to London.

Soon after his appointment as primus, Bishop Skinner was deputed by the episcopal college to go to London, along with Bishops Drummond and Strahan as a deputation, to negotiate for a repeal of the penal laws. It was found that negotiations could not be effectually carried on in Scotland, and all the parliamentary friends of the church strongly urged the sending up of one or more accredited representatives of the church to London, to superintend the introduction of a bill into parliament. The primus had had some correspondence with Mr. Henry Dundas, "the Minister for Scotland," and had, at that gentleman's "special desire," sent him a draught of a relief bill; but before Mr. Dundas could find time to form or give an opinion on the document, he was summoned to London. To London it was agreed to follow him. Immediately after Easter, 1789, Bishops Skinner, Strahan, and Drummond, set out for the Metropolis, leaving Edinburgh on the 20th, and reaching London on the 24th April. This was the speediest rate of travelling known at that time. It accomplished the

distance between the two capitals in four days. This was about half the number of hours which the Scotch Express now takes: but it was a great acceleration on the rate which had prevailed but a short time previously, when weeks were spent on the journey, and the prudent traveller always made his will before he started.

The Bishops in London.

How the bishops conducted their business in London is very accurately known. Primus Skinner kept a careful record of their proceedings from the first, and this he caused to be deposited in the episcopal chest for preservation. On their arrival in London, the bishops proceeded at once to business.

Scotch Peers and M.P.'s

They waited on those members of parliament to whom they had letters of introduction. They were well received, and were waited upon in turn. "The Earls of Breadalbane and Fife, the Lords Stormont and Kinnaird, &c.," did them "the honour to call for them, and proffer" them "their services as soon as" the bishops "had drawn up a memorial of their case which they (these peers) could put into the hands of their friends."

Most of the gentlemen to whom they had introductions were Scotch; but all persons of influence to whom they made application, whether Scotch or English, appeared to be more or less friendly and

sympathetic. In fact, the only active and declared opponents of the bill belonged to the qualified episcopalians of Scotland.

Help from Scotch Professors and Doctors.

The Established Church of Scotland not only did not oppose them, but, through its leading men, actively helped them. Principal Robertson, Edinburgh; Principal Campbell, and Drs. Beattie and Gerrard, Aberdeen, did what they could for the relief bill at every stage of the negotiations. All or most of these men had friends of influence in the political world. To them they repeatedly wrote letters, in which they disclaimed, not only for themselves but also for their church, all feeling of hostility to the bill.

English Bishops.

The deputation naturally looked first and chiefly to the English bishops. They addressed themselves at first by letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, stating the purpose for which they had come to London, craving his "powerful support," and requesting an interview. The interview was granted, and his grace received them "with every mark of respect." He carefully questioned them in regard to their case, and concluded by assuring them, that, as soon as the case of the English dissenters was disposed of, the bishops would meet and consider their case. The other prelates were no less friendly. Bishop Bagot of Norwich received them "with a great deal of mild civility." He had beside him, and during the interview

made reference to, Skinner of Linshart's "Ecclesiastical History"—an incident which could not but be very gratifying to the author's son.

Bishops Warren and Horsley.

The bishops had received letters of introduction to Warren of Bangor, who was said to be the only bishop who had any influence with Chancellor Thurlow. He, too, was friendly; but it is clear from Primus Skinner's account, that of all the English bishops, the great Horsley of St. Asaph was the only one who took up their case with zeal and fervour. From the first he appeared to make the case his own, and to prepare himself to plead it before his peers with all his ability and commanding eloquence. "He entered," says the primus, "on the discussion of our claims with all his characteristic keenness, taking notes of our answers to all his queries, and happy to find that we differed from the Church of England on no essential point of doctrine or discipline." What more could a well-feed advocate have done!

On the whole, things looked well for the northern bill. In the upper house especially, its prospects seemed bright and unclouded. The Scotch temporal peers and the English spiritual peers were all favourable to it; and there was no indication of opposition from any other peer, or class of peers. The bishops were, in fact, encouraged by every political sign and symptom, to push on their bill at once. At the same time they took the utmost pains, in drawing it up, so to express themselves as "to secure the desired relief without exciting jealousy or opposition."

Introduction of the Bill.

The bill was introduced into the house of commons on the 15th of June, 1789, and "carried through all its readings in fifteen days," and that, too, without any opposition or dissent. Nothing could be more encouraging. The bill was introduced by Mr. Harry Dundas, the premier's "ablest lieutenant," and seconded by another Scotchman, Dempster of Dunnichen, who told the bishops that "not only did every person in the house listen to the motion with apparent satisfaction, but that, when Sir Harry Houghton was voted into the chair, he was heard to say, he never took it with greater pleasure than on the same occasion."

House of Lords—Lord Thurlow.

Not one opponent had appeared against the bill in the commons; only one appeared in the lords; but he, though not the first minister of the crown, nor even on friendly terms with the first minister, yet proved a most obstructive and damaging opponent, and was, in fact, the evil genius of the bill from first to last. He delayed its passage for three years, and clogged it, when it did pass, with needless, troublesome, and humiliating restrictions, which hampered the church's action for upwards of half a century.

Thurlow's Motives.

What moved the surly and self-willed chancellor to the course he took cannot now be ascertained with

absolute certainty. All the letter writers of the time speculate on the subject, and all assume that it was nothing of a public nature, but something wholly personal and private—something of pique or jealousy. The bishops had not consulted him, first of all, and then they had got their bill introduced by a friend of Pitt's. These two incidents—the apparent slight to the chancellor, and the seeming honour to the premier —were, in the opinion of Bishop Skinner's London correspondents, quite sufficient to account for the chancellor's determined opposition. Without some personal motive of this sort, he would not, they thought, have taken any interest in such a bill. It was not in his line.

The Bishops apprised of Thurlow's Opposition.

It was not till the day of the second reading of the bill in the commons, that the Scotch bishops had any suspicion of opposition ahead. On that day, however, they learned that "the Lord Chancellor, and the Attorney and Solicitor-Generals, were complaining that neither he nor they knew anything of the bill." This greatly troubled the good men ; and they made haste to propitiate the offended officials. At Mr. Dundas's suggestion they sent to each of them a written copy of the bill (which had not yet been printed), accompanied, in each case, by a letter of apology for "the unintentional mistake" of delay, which had been committed.

The Attorney-General, &c.

The Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General were very easily appeased. They assured the bishops that they should "meet no opposition from them."

Thurlow Implacable.

The bishops made the most humble apology to the chancellor, but to no purpose. The reason, as they urged, why they had not sent him a copy of their second bill, as they had done of their first, was that the second bill was, they "were assured, altogether unexceptionable;" and therefore not a matter with which such a busy man should be troubled. However, "if there has been any want of attention on our part," said the anxious prelates, "we would be most happy to atone for it, if we knew how." So far as appears, no notice was taken of this humble apology.

Progress of the Bill.

Meantime the bill's progress was rapid and unopposed. Introduced on June 15th, it passed the commons on June 29th, and was "ordered to the House of Lords, where it was presented by Mr. Dundas, and on motion by the Earl of Hopetoun, was read the first time." The bishops had begun to breathe more freely, hoping that "no serious opposition was intended" by the chancellor; but a few days later they learned that he was "still adverse to the measure, and said, 'it was most indecently brought

forward.'" They also found out what one of his objections was. He objected "to the oath inserted in the bill for the oath of abjuration." His lordship, in fact, had been determined to fix on them the oath of abjuration, which, however loyal they might be now, they could not conscientiously take.

Second Letter to Thurlow.

The bishops, therefore, wrote again to the chancellor, pleading hard for better terms, and especially for exemption from this oath. It had, they said, "an evident retrospect." It made them disclaim the right of the Stuarts in the past, as well as in the present. It "could only be taken with safety by those who never believed the rights which it disclaimed." They "dared not profess to have been loyal before they actually were so." They "could not venture upon" this oath "without involving themselves in the guilt of perjury, a hardship which, they trusted, the British legislature would never impose upon them." They were "told that the Roman Catholics had been indulged with a new oath of supremacy." They could not but hope that his "Lordship would view their case in a like favourable light, and permit" their "Bill to pass through the House with the indulgence which it had experienced in the Commons." But if, without the prescribed oaths there was to be for them no legal toleration, then, said they, "we shall be satisfied with that *connivance* which is extended to a numerous body of Scotch Dissenters, of whom no oaths of any kind are required." The bishops concluded with a most

reasonable request, viz., that the bill might not be "rejected, but remitted, with amendments, to the House of Commons."

It is very unlikely that this letter produced the slightest effect on the obdurate chancellor; and apparently it was not delivered in time to affect the fate of the present bill. It was first submitted to Mr. Dundas, who seemed to consider it a matter of indifference whether it was forwarded or not; evidently regarding the chancellor's objections as insincere and factitious. "I can give you no advice," he wrote (4th July, 1789, half-past 9), as to your conduct in the House of Lords, nor can I advise you how to obviate objections which I do not understand, nor could have conceived that they could have been made!" The letter to the chancellor was probably not delivered till Monday, July 6th. But on that very day the second reading of the bill was proposed in the upper house, by Lord Kinnaird; and the chancellor moved that it be "adjourned to the 29th of September."

The Bill Thrown Out.

Such a motion by such a man sealed the fate of the bill. It could not be proceeded with. Apparently Thurlow did not make a set speech against the bill, but merely threw out a few bold erastian remarks, such as that "there could be no bishops without the king's authority." But this was enough. Lord Hopetoun told the bishops that he thought it was better to acquiesce in rejection without a division, than "running the risk of a trial of strength, when the chancellor

might have been induced to speak on the subject, and thus do the cause irreparable injury."

Thurlow's Abnormal Influence.

It may seem strange that any member of either house of parliament, not being premier, nor even acting in concert with the premier, should thus have, as it were, by a word, paralysed the action of both houses. But in those days, circumstances occasionally lent an abnormal influence even to a subordinate member of the government. A hundred years ago, in the earlier period of George III.'s reign, ministers stood to their chief, to the crown, and to parliament, in a very different relation from that which is occupied by ministers at the present day. A minister who was in high favour at court—especially a minister in the position of lord chancellor, the "Keeper of the King's conscience"—seemed to think he might, in parliament, do very much as he liked. Thurlow certainly did so for a time. He had been an assiduous and even "an obsequious courtier;" he supported all the king's favourite views, especially those that were opposed by Pitt. To the king he was ever all submission and deference; to Pitt he was generally all but openly rebellious and antagonistic. During the past year (1788) Thurlow had, for a time, violently refused to put the royal seal to Pitt's appointment of a high legal official. The two had ceased to have any but the most absolutely unavoidable intercourse. During the king's recent attack of insanity, Thurlow had secretly intrigued with the prince and the whig leaders against

Pitt. Though "charged with the conduct of the Government business in the Upper House," he seldom gave any real help. Pitt "declared that he was never quite certain what part" he "would take in debate;" * if he "opened his mouth" at all, he did so only on one occasion in the session following the present one. "Ever since the King's recovery," Thurlow, conscious of his "treachery," had shown special "aversion and bitterness to Mr. Pitt." Everything indeed that is known of his conduct at this time, gives countenance to the notion already referred to as expressed by some of Bishop Skinner's London correspondents, that one main reason for his throwing out the relief bill was, that it was introduced by Dundas, Pitt's chief lieutenant. It was a blow struck at Pitt, through his friend. It was one thing, however, to throw out a bill of Pitt's friend; it was another thing to throw out a bill of Pitt's own. To this the "haughty Chancellor" at last came, and that too, strangely enough, on the next occasion when the little Scotch church appealed to parliament—the reader will see with what consequences.

* Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," V., p. 602. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," II., 72. Thurlow's "treachery" to Pitt was regarded as equal treachery to the king; and his effusive loyalty, when the king began to show signs of recovery, provoked the most bitter sarcasms from the leading men on both sides. When he gave utterance in the house of lords to the famous declaration, "When I forget my King, may my God forget me!" Pitt, who was standing on the steps of the throne, "rushed out of the House, exclaiming, several times, 'O what a rascal!'" Wilkes, who was "under the throne," said something most wittily sarcastic, but profane. Burke said wittily and sarcastically, but not profanely, "God forget you; the best thing that could happen to you."—See Stanhope's "Pitt," II., 10.

With the present relief bill of the Scotch bishops, Thurlow doubtless felt he might do very much as he liked, as neither the premier nor the general public knew or cared much about it.

Appeal to Bishop Warren.

Bishop Skinner and his colleagues were naturally very much cast down by the sudden collapse of their bill. Out of the depths, as it were, they wrote an impassioned letter to Bishop Warren of Bangor—Thurlow's reputed friend—imploring his help, and begging for an interview. Warren answered them that very evening (July 6th), "on returning from the House of Lords." He gave them but cold comfort. He did not know "precisely" what the chancellor's opinion was, and would not mention it though he did, "not having authority to do so." He declined the proposed conference, but said, if they should be "advised to make another attempt," they would find him "the same firm friend to the Church."

How the English Bishops generally behaved to the Deputation.

Bishop Warren's conduct towards his northern brethren, on this occasion, was a fair sample of that of his brethren on the English bench. They were all friendly, but with one single exception, they were all somewhat cold, and very cautious, reserved, and calculating. They wished well to the cause, but they thought twice before doing anything

for it, and they kept themselves distant and aloof from the poor prelates. They received them, at an audience, "with a great deal of mild civility," but they did not ask them to dinner to meet persons of standing and weight, whom they might have influenced, nor when the rejection of their bill was so suddenly proposed in the upper house, did they stand up as a united body and try to shame the surly chancellor out of his purpose.

Letter of William Stevens.

So much, in fact, did their coldness and indifference strike that excellent and consistent churchman, William Stevens, that he seemed to think it not altogether impossible that the opposition to the bill "originated with" one of their number. The following extracts from an unpublished letter of his to Primus Skinner (October 29th, 1789), are, on this point, of great interest and value, as giving the views of one who had excellent opportunities for obtaining information, and who was equally friendly to the English bishops and the Scottish :—

Rt. Revd. Sir,*

I am glad to think you could extract any comfort from your visit into the south. Certainly you must have a particular art to be able to do it.

As to the reception you and your worthy colleagues met with in general, I must confess it could give you no favourable opinion of our Church, or rather Churchmen ; it will not bear mentioning ; it was a shame and a reproach. Being from home when your letter came, it was sent after me into Kent, where I had the opportunity of a conversation

* It is thus that Mr. Stevens usually addresses the Bishop. The address on the back of the letter is—"The Rev. Mr. Skinner, Aberdeen."

on the subject with your good friend at Canterbury [Dr. Berkeley]. It was agreed, that for the success of your future operations, it was necessary to know the *real* cause, as you observe, of the opposition, so unexpectedly raised against you in the House of Lords, last session; but how to obtain such information is the difficulty. One would not willingly suppose it could originate with any of the Rt. Rev. Bench, *though from the outward behaviour of them in general, and the, I may say, no countenance shown you by them*, there is too good reason to suspect it. That they wished well to the cause, is more than can easily be believed; for if they had, they must have given it a more cordial support. Indeed, being apt to consider it as their strength and their wisdom too, to sit still, they might think, perhaps, they should do you more harm than good by declaring openly in your favour; but if that was the case, it was mean, wretched policy. As to the Chancellor, if the opposition originated with him, it must have been from wanton caprice, either because he *dislikes the persons* who first brought the Bill forward, or because he had not been primarily consulted about it. . . . From my connexion and intercourse with the Rt. Rev. Bench, little is to be expected. Their Lordships are, for the most part, *cold* and *cautious*, *distant* and *reserved*—swift to hear the sentiments of others, slow to speak their own.

Mr. Stevens evidently understood well the general character and the policy both of the chancellor and of the bishops. Yet he had probably but little idea of the nature of Thurlow's recent intrigues with the opposition, and the bitterness of his feeling towards Pitt and Pitt's friends. "In the country at large, the intrigues of Thurlow were not known: they were not even suspected"—(Stanhope's "Pitt," II., 10).

CHAPTER VII.

1789.

Deputation returns to Scotland—An Accuser comes forth—Mr. George Monck Berkeley issues a Circular to the Church—First Laurencekirk Convention—Opening Address of the Primus—Gives Account of Mission—Apologises for not formally consulting Church beforehand—Had done so informally—Address well received—Convention thanks Bishops—Appoints Committee to continue Negotiations—Its Influence on raising Reputation of Primus—Attends to Charitable Funds of Church—Great Success of Convention—Formation of London Committee.

THE three bishops returned to Scotland in the middle of July, 1789. They had been absent more than three months. They had had an excellent cause—that of good subjects and quiet citizens pleading for religious freedom and toleration with the "mother of Parliaments." Yet they had failed. Their bill had been thrown out. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, if the blame was laid at their own doors.

An Accuser.

Only one accuser, however, appeared. A single youthful opponent came forth against them, as the stripling David came forth against Goliath ; but with different bearing, and a different result. The stripling

had the boastfulness of Goliath, rather than the modesty of David. He had hard words for the deputation, but no fatal argumentative bolt to hurl at its head. He proceeded to all appearance entirely on assumption, taking it for granted that the bishops' failure was wholly due to their own incompetence and mismanagement.

The assailant was Mr. George Monck Berkeley—the primus's quondam visitor at Aberdeen, and the son of his voluminous correspondent, the sub-dean of Canterbury—a young English gentleman living at that time at Stirling with the Rev. George Gleig. Mr. Gleig very probably had something to do with the attack, indirectly at least; but the style and manner in which the attack was delivered, were doubtless altogether Mr. Berkeley's own.

Mr. Berkeley's Circular.

Over the signature of "A Lay Member of the Episcopal Church in Scotland," Mr. Berkeley addressed a circular to "The Clerical and Lay Members" of that church, in which he made a very good suggestion, viz., the appointment of two representatives—one of the laity, and one of "the inferior clergy"—to "attend such Bishops as may be disposed to go upon a second embassy to London," and keep them right. This good suggestion was, however, made in a bad manner. It accused the bishops of assumption and arrogance in undertaking their mission "without the advice or approbation of the inferior clergy," and declared that they had "plainly evinced their utter incapacity to execute their own plans." This was the

way not to recommend the plan, but to prevent its adoption. The circular was couched in the style of that *eirenicum* by a famous man, which a yet more famous man likened to "the presentation of an olive branch on the point of a sword." The plan could not be carried out without the concurrence of the bishops, and the insult offered to them in proposing it, might well make them set their faces as a flint against it. Fortunately a similar, and yet more complete and constitutional plan, had already been formed by the primus, and the only effect of the circular was to "determine" him to carry it out at once. He "had previously," says his son ("Annals," p. 125), "meant to assemble a convention of the Church, composed of all the clergy, with a lay delegate or delegates from every congregation." The primus proposed to the college of bishops to assemble the convention "without delay. . . . The College readily agreed," and the thing was done.

The First Laurencekirk Convention.

The primus sent an intimation to every clergyman of the church, that "on Wednesday, the 11th day of November next, at 11 o'clock forenoon, a general meeting of the Bishops and Clergy," and "some person or persons as delegates, or delegates from the laity" of each congregation, would be "holden at the village of Laurencekirk."

The convention met as summoned, and it was "as respectably and numerously attended as circumstances would admit of."

Opening Address.

The primus opened the meeting with a short address, stating the object for which they had been assembled, and adding, in effect, that as the meeting was not of a strictly ecclesiastical character, its proceedings would not be regulated by ecclesiastical rules. He therefore concluded by proposing that they should, as in ordinary public meetings, "proceed to choose a Praeses and a Clerk," and then "lay down a few rules for carrying on the business of the meeting." The primus himself was "unanimously chosen as Praeses, and the Rev. Roger Aitken, Aberdeen, Clerk."

Mode of Voting.

The convention then proceeded to settle the mode of voting. It had been intimated in the circular convening the meeting that proxies would be allowed, and the allowance of them was on a very liberal system. Every clergyman, as clergyman, was allowed one vote for himself, though only one—whatever number of charges he might serve. He had also a vote for every proxy which he held, whether from a clergyman or a congregation. When a congregation sent no lay representative, the vote of that congregation was assigned to its clergyman. Congregations were permitted, without restriction, to send, if they thought fit, more than one lay representative. Doubtless this permission was given in order to secure an adequate representation of the large town congrega-

tions. How the votes were made up—what proportion of them were proxies, and what personal, and what ratio the lay votes bore to the clerical, is not stated. The number only is given. "In all, it was found that not fewer than eighty-four votes were present." * Such was the constitution of what may be termed the first representative church council.

Business.

The voting powers of the members having been settled, the clerk put to the meeting the question, whether "the business should be opened from the chair?"

Primus gives Account of Mission.

This was agreed to, and the primus at once addressed himself to the task of laying before the meeting a full and particular account of the whole proceedings of himself and his two colleagues in their late mission to London. Before commencing his statement, he cautioned his audience † against "pub-

* The Church Council of the present day, which meets annually and allows of no proxies, has generally an attendance of from three to four hundred.

† The wisdom of this caution is obvious. The church's zealous London friends naturally felt the necessity of observing it more keenly than their Scotch friends. In a letter which the primus received from Mr. Stevens, ten days after this meeting (November 21, 1789), it is said, "I find, it is thought, the less that is said the better about whether the Bishop of Bangor is or is not a friend to the cause, has or has not the ear of the chancellor, or whether Dundas and the chancellor are or are not well with one another, as such conversation does no good, and may come round to those where it may do harm."

lishing to the world" any remarks which might be made "on persons high in office," and mentioned also that he had laid upon the table the originals or copies of most of "the letters, cards, and other vouchers," to which reference would be made in his statement. Any of these he would, if desired, read to the meeting, or hand, for perusal, to any member or members.

Apologises for not Convening them sooner.

After concluding his narrative, the primus apologised to the assembled clergy and laity for not having called them together *before*, instead of after, the appeal to parliament. He would have done so if he could. He had been "all along impressed with the sentiment" that the bishops should not undertake such a mission as they did "without the support of those who were equally interested in the issue of it," *i.e.*, the other clergy and the laity. But it was impossible to convene those orders for consultation without neglecting what was, on all hands, regarded as the most favourable opportunity for appealing to parliament.

No time for Consultation.

"Such," said the primus, "was the situation of things at the period to which I am now looking back, that it was not in my power, nor in the power of my colleagues, to take any other measures than those which the spur of the occasion prompted. The month of March last, being the time when parliament may have been said to have recovered from the shock produced by his majesty's dangerous indisposition [insanity], my col-

leagues and myself were daily reminded, from all quarters of the kingdom, that now was our time to apply to government for a redress of our grievances, while our compliance was fresh in the minds of the people, and when the nation was all in good humour." The opportunity was not to be lost. Action had to be taken at once. If the church was to be consulted, a convention must be assembled without delay.

The Roads Blocked.

But it could not be assembled. The roads were all blocked. "In the month of March this year . . . there was such a fall of snow on the ground, as to render the roads well nigh impassable in most districts of Scotland ; and before the weather was tolerably settled, and the roads fit for travelling, the Easter holidays were at hand, a season, we all know, which admits not of clergymen travelling to any distance from home ; yet the week preceding passion week, or passion week itself, was the very time when such a meeting as the present could have answered any good purpose, as the general opinion was, that the last session of parliament would not have lasted above a month or six weeks after the Easter holidays, and many reports prevailed that it would have ended sooner."

The Church "in the dark."

Even had a convention been practicable in the spring, it was, in the circumstances, "far from probable that any decisive resolution would have been the result of it." The state of matters was very different then,

both within the church and without. "Both Clergy and Laity were" then "too much in the dark" to take fit counsel on the subject, and the civil authorities were too distrustful of them not to be suspicious of their meeting in open convention. Now all was changed. "The House of His Majesty's faithful Commons . . . one of the branches of the British Legislature," had given their cause its "unanimous sanction. . . . Some of the first characters in the nation" had "treated" it "with becoming respect," and "honoured" it "with friendly support." The church could now hold up its head, "while," said the primus, "the mouths of our enemies, if not shut by the countenance which we have received, will not be opened half so wide as they would have been six months ago."

Had Consulted the Church Informally.

After all, however, the speaker in effect added—though he had not found it possible to consult the church in convention, yet he and his colleagues had done their utmost to secure an informal consultation of it. In every way that was open to him, he (the primus) had sounded the leading churchmen, not only in his own diocese, but also in the dioceses of Dunkeld, and of Moray and Ross. His colleagues, he understood, had done the same in the southern dioceses. And in this way they had received, on all hands, not only assurances of warm approval of their mission, but also "ample recommendations to members of both Houses of Parliament," so that it was not too much to say, that the deputation was substantially, though not formally, representative of the whole church.

The Address well Received.

The convention received the primus's address in a way that must have been highly gratifying to him and his two colleagues. Apparently there was not a whisper of dissent or dissatisfaction, but, on the contrary, an entire unanimity of approval.

The proceedings were indeed of a somewhat stiff and formal character. Every act seemed to be pre-arranged, and the business was conducted by readers rather than by speakers. But this was perhaps only what was to be expected. The church, having been for forty years forbidden to meet in public, could have little familiarity with the forms of public meetings, and its representatives were probably shy of adventuring a speech. Further, the general feeling of sympathy with the bishops was apparently so decided, and found such clear expression in the resolution proposed to the meeting, that opposition appeared hopeless. Anyhow there was no opposition, nor even criticism, though the able and critically-disposed Mr. Gleig was present.

The Convention thanks the Bishops.

When the primus concluded his address "it was resolved, on motion," that he should leave the chair, and that the convention should form itself into a committee for taking into consideration "the proceedings communicated by Bishop Skinner." The committee then, on the motion of the Rev. Roger Aitken, Aberdeen, seconded by the Rev. John

Allan, Edinburgh, passed a resolution acquitting the bishops of all blame for the failure of the relief measure, and thanking them for "the zeal, alacrity, and indefatigable diligence, by which they attempted the relief of the church." The steps which the bishops had taken to pass their bill "appeared at the time the most proper that could have been taken," and the rejection of the bill was due to "causes which persons in their situation could not be supposed to foresee, and therefore could not guard against." The resolution was carried unanimously, and a committee was appointed, consisting of the mover and seconder, along with Mr. Gleig and Mr. John Niven, to "prepare an address of thanks, in terms of the motion, and to report the same to next sederunt." This was done.

The Convention appoints a Committee.

The convention then addressed itself to the chief purpose for which it had been assembled. It resolved to appoint "a Committee, with full powers to manage and carry on the measures which were still held necessary for obtaining a repeal of the penal statutes; this committee should consist of three Bishops, three Presbyters, and three Lay persons; the Senior Bishop (*i.e.*, the Primus) to be Preses, and allowed to call meetings, with consent of two-thirds of the Committee." It was also resolved that the committee "should choose a secretary, and, if they found it expedient, to send agents to London. These agents were to be chosen from among themselves, and to be styled 'Delegates from the Committee of the Convention of the Scottish Episcopal Church.'"

The committee appointed by the convention consisted of the three bishops who had formed the deputation—Bishops Skinner, Strachan, and Abernethy Drummond—the three presbyters who had drawn up "the address of thanks"—Messrs. Aitken, Allan, and Gleig—and three landed proprietors—Messrs. John Patullo of Balhouffie; John Stirling of Kippendavie, and John Niven of Thornton.

The appointment of such a committee must have been very satisfactory to the primus and his brother bishops. It was a step which was calculated to relieve them of labour, anxiety, and responsibility, without, in any sensible degree, diminishing their influence.

The Convention raises the Reputation of the Primus.

As regards the primus indeed, instead of there being any diminution, there was from this time forth a great and marked increase of his influence. The Laurencekirk convention left him much more powerful and influential than it found him. His "narrative" convinced the assembled brethren of his zeal, energy, and capacity; the church and the committee reposed full confidence in him; and the conduct of the relief negotiations fell more and more into his hands. Thus, as regards its main purpose, the convention was a great success, and, to the primus, a very gratifying one.

The Convention attends to Charitable Funds.

It accomplished another object that lay near his heart. It placed the charitable funds of the church under safe and efficient management. "By bank-

ruptcies and otherwise" these funds "had of late much decreased. . . . No distribution had been made, during the last twelve months, to indigent clergymen and widows." Five bishops, therefore, with the primus at their head, were now appointed as trustees of the funds, and "rules and restrictions" were laid down for their guidance in the management of the same. This was a great service to the church, and one that indicated even more clearly than the appointment of the relief committee, how serviceable such representative gatherings might be made to the church—how well they were fitted to impart to its leading members—lay and clerical—a practical knowledge of its affairs, and a lively interest in the same.

Great Success of the Convention.

The convention brought its proceedings to a close with a vote of thanks to the primus, as chairman, "for the able and candid manner in which he had conducted the business of the meeting." He deserved thanks, not only for the conduct of the business, but still more for the very idea of such a representative church council. It is only within the last twelve years (1875-1887) that the idea has been fully realised, and the occasional convention has become the annual representative church council; but even then the institution was far from being unappreciated or unfruitful.

London Committee formed.

One of its most interesting results was its effect on the church's London friends. No sooner did these

zealous churchmen learn what the convention had done, than they went and did likewise. Three of the most able and zealous of them—William Stevens, James Allan Park, and the Rev. George Gaskin—formed themselves into "a committee of correspondence with the committee in Scotland," and "determined to meet once a week, or as often as the occasion might require," in order to insure steady and effective co-operation. Thus were matters put in train, both north and south, for a renewal of the parliamentary campaign.

CHAPTER VIII.

Repeal Movement in new phase—Labouring oar falls to Primus—London the centre of negotiation—Another attempt to propitiate Thurlow—Fails—Bill for Abolition of Test Act blocks way of Repeal Bill—Test Act, English Penal Law—How it differed from Scotch—Passing gleam of hope—But no abatement of opposition—Bill postponed to Session of 1791—Encouraging resolution of Aberdeen clergy—Mr. James Allan Park in Aberdeen—Preparations for Session of 1791—Scotch Orders "inadmissible" in England—Bill again postponed for a Session—Primus "deputed" to go to London.

THE repeal movement now entered on a new and promising phase. Every precaution was taken to ensure careful and cautious, as well as energetic procedure. The zeal and energy, which last session were unrestrained, were now tempered by rule and form. The two committees, acting in the two ends of the Island, had to consult with each other, and deliberate on every step. This formed a safeguard against rash and compromising action, while the representative character of the committees imparted weight to their decisions.

After a brief space, however, it became clear that, in the actual transaction of business, there was little real change. The leading agents continued the same, and in Scotland they were fewer rather than more numerous. The home committee were able and

zealous men, but they lived too far apart to meet except at rare intervals. At one of their earliest meetings, therefore (Perth, Feb. 26, 1790), they empowered their chairman and clerk, *i.e.*, the primus and his synod clerk, both living in Aberdeen, to "correspond in their name with the London Committee, and take" the proper "steps for bringing the proposed repeal to an issue."

The Main Burden of Home Work falls on the Primus.

The effect of this arrangement was to throw on the primus almost the whole weight and burden of the home committee business. It was he that mainly conducted the correspondence on the one side, Dr. Gaskin and Mr. Stevens on the other. London and Aberdeen became the centres of business.

London the Chief Centre of Activity.

London, of course, was the chief centre. The committee there for some time did almost all that could be done in the business. They paved the way for the bill. They ascertained the best time for bringing it forward. They explained its merits to men of weight and position, and they brought influence to bear upon those in power. They thus saved the home committee endless waste of time and trouble.

Attempt to propitiate Thurlow.

The first task to which the two committees addressed themselves was an endeavour to undo the

effects of the mistake of last year, viz., the neglect to submit the bill first to the law officers of the crown and have it brought in as a government measure.

For this purpose the Scotch committee wrote "general letters" to the lord chancellor, the attorney general, and the solicitor general, begging those high officials to pardon them if, in the introduction of their bill in the previous year, they had inadvertently been guilty of any want of respect to them, and soliciting their "powerful support" in behalf of a second bill.

The London committee took the utmost pains to ensure an effective delivery of these letters. They sent each letter, accompanied with an explanatory card briefly pointing out its purport; and, whenever possible, they secured the services of some influential friend of the recipient, who, in handing him the letter, gave a verbal explanation of its purport, and urged due attention to the same. Lord Chancellor Thurlow's letter they had delivered to him by Bishop Warren of Bangor—the only bishop on the bench who was believed to have his ear.

Reception given to the Apologies.

The committee found that the apologies were received much as in the previous year. The attorney and solicitor generals were easily propitiated, and readily offered their help and countenance, but the chancellor was as unfriendly and as sullenly obstructive as ever. Bishop Warren could only report of him that the chancellor "did not seem to understand the matter."

This was in February, 1790. In May of the same year, Dr. Gaskin wrote the primus that Bishop

Horsley had "at last spoken to the Chancellor, but he found him so uninformed upon the business that, he said, it would take him too much time to make him understand it to give us any reasonable hope of success this season." (Annals, 180.) So it continued to the end. "Still did this great man's opposition to us continue," said the primus to the Laurencekirk convention, "assuming various hues, so that when to one friend he would seem to have relented, and would express himself 'almost persuaded that our requests were reasonable,' in conference with another he would recur to all his former objections, and be as stiff and inflexible as he had ever been." If the chancellor ever seemed convinced, he was "convinced against his will," and thus remained "of the same opinion still."

His obstruction was a standing obstacle, which could only be overborne by a steady marshalling of friendly and well instructed authorities fitted to "convince" the house in spite of him.

The Test Act.

But during the session of 1790 there was a passing obstacle, which, in the opinion of the London committee, completely blocked for the time the way of the Scotch bill. This was the bill for the abolition of the test act.

The English Dissenters' Penal Law.

The test act made the reception of the holy communion in the English church an indispensable preliminary to a candidate's appointment to any government

office. In these days it would probably be "universally agreed" that such a law could not only do no good to the English church or the English state, but, on the contrary, much evil to both, exciting bitter prejudices against the church, and demoralising alike churchmen and dissenters by the encouragement of hypocrisy and the desecration of a holy rite.

English Churchmen's Views of Test Act.

The churchmen of those times, however, thought differently. They looked on the test act as a "bulwark of the Church," and while this act was in danger they could attend to no other parliamentary work. "It is universally agreed" (Feb. 3, 1790), wrote one of the primus's correspondents, doubtless Mr. Stevens, "that the business must be postponed to the Dissenters' Bill, for even the Bishop of St. David's (Horsley), who is a warm friend of the cause, told Dr. Gaskin, the other day, that 'your Bill must not be received until that is disposed of.' Indeed, it is not to be expected that the Church of England will go to the field to assist an ally when she herself is attacked in her own fortress." That is, they thought that to relieve the dissenters was to attack the church—a too natural but a most erroneous assumption, which shewed how little the principles of toleration or the true interests of the church were understood at the time. A truly tolerant and enlightened statesman or churchman would have said at once—let these two classes of disabilities balance each other—let the two parties unite in sweeping them both off the statute book as unjust and oppressive restrictions.

How the Grievances differed.

No doubt there was a difference between the grievances of the two classes of sufferers. The English dissenters suffered civil disabilities on account of their religion, while the Scotch episcopalians suffered both civil and religious disabilities on account of their politics. However they differed, the disabilities were, in either case, unjust and oppressive, inconsistent with toleration and liberty of conscience. No doubt the anxious Scotch committee were greatly disappointed to find their parliamentary friends turning aside from helping the Scotch bill to hinder the English bill. But they had no alternative, and must submit.

The English dissenters' bill might not indeed have proved an altogether insuperable obstacle had there been any abatement of Thurlow's opposition. But of this there was no sign whatever.

Passing gleam of hope.

The London committee had been deluded by a momentary gleam of hope in this matter, about the middle of April, 1790. On the 13th of April, the lord advocate "had a conversation in the House of Lords with Lord Chancellor Thurlow on the Scottish Episcopal Bill, the result of which was that the Chancellor would think of what had passed for a day or two, and let his Lordship know his sentiments. Two objections, it appeared, had arisen in Lord Thurlow's mind. The first was that the Scottish Bishops derive their authority from the Pretender;

the second, that they were desirous of acquiring temporal ecclesiastical jurisdiction by legislative sanction."

The London committee seemed to think that now at last their trouble was at an end. They understood now what the chancellor's objections were, and they knew that they were wholly groundless, and might be removed with a word. They "rejoiced to find these the only serious objections in this great man's mind, because, say they, 'an instant of time will now set him right,' and then they add 'we have written three letters, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Bishops of Bangor and St. David's, stating the Chancellor's objections, and requesting their immediate assistance, so that we trust a few days more will determine the event of this cause.'"

No Abatement of Opposition.

It is impossible not to feel pity for those earnest, single-minded men thus vainly thrown into a flutter of joyous expectation! They did not yet sufficiently know their man. There was, as yet, no real change in the chancellor's mind, and he apparently never again thought of the matter, or had any further communication with the lord advocate. About three weeks afterwards Bishop Horsley, one of the three prelates whom they had commissioned to "set him right," had "at last spoken to the Chancellor," but it was then that he "found him so uninformed upon the business" that instead of "an instant of time" setting "him right," the whole session would not suffice. "It would take him too much time to make him understand it, to give us any reasonable hope of success this season."

The lord advocate had come to the same conclusion a few days earlier. He wrote Dr. Gaskin (April 30, 1790) that "it was impossible for him to go again to the Lord Chancellor . . . unless his Lordship was to send for me, and hint at a desire of being farther informed on the business." On account of this obstruction, and other obstacles, he and the attorney general, with whom he had just had a consultation, "concurred in the inexpediency of urging the repeal this Session."

Postponement of the Bill.

The London committee, as Dr. Gaskin wrote the primus (May 30, 1790), regarded these decisions of their chief parliamentary friends "as a final damper to all our hopes and expectations this Session" (1790). They were "disappointed," but not in the least "dispirited." They looked forward with confidence to the session of 1791, and by the very next post (May 4), Dr. Gaskin forwarded to the primus a comforting item of intelligence on this head — "The Bishop (Horsley) designs to breakfast with the Chancellor on Saturday, the 15th instant (May, 1790), when he will enter fully into the subject, and he thinks he shall be able so thoroughly to possess him with the merits of the cause as to enable us to begin in the ensuing Session."

The primus now saw that all chance of the introduction of the Bill in this session of 1790 was gone. He, too, was "disappointed" but not "dispirited." The other members of the home committee, to all of

whom he immediately communicated the above particulars, took the same view of the matter as he did. They "all joined in regretting the unlucky delay in the business entrusted to their management." But they saw that the delay was inevitable. They had full confidence in their parliamentary friends, who had counselled it, and who assured them that "there was no doubt of their ultimate success."

The delay of a year, now that their case had been before parliament, and so many eminent churchmen and statesmen had become interested in it, was a matter of little importance. Time was on their side, and the longer the delay the more satisfactory the issue. The church at large, as represented by the clergy, took the same hopeful view of the case as the committee did. The synods of the different dioceses, led by Aberdeen, supported the committee with approving and encouraging resolutions.

Resolution by the Aberdeen Clergy.

The synod of Aberdeen took the matter up, as usual, in a systematic and business-like way, and considered it both as a synod and as a "presbytery," the elder John Skinner presiding over the presbytery, and the younger over the synod.

The synod met on the 18th of August, 1790, and the bishop laid before it an account of all the steps that had been taken during last session by himself and his co-committee men. Thereafter, the synod adjourned till six o'clock in the evening. "In the interim a Presbytery was constituted, which consisted

of" fifteen clergymen, whose names are given; and who, after considering the information communicated to them by the bishop, unanimously passed a resolution "approving of the measures of the Committee," thanking them for "their zeal and assiduity," expressing full confidence in them, and recommending to them to "solicit the aid of such noblemen and gentlemen as had the interest of the church at heart, &c.," especially that of the Earl of Kelly. The resolution was moved by Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Watson, and seconded by Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Torry, and the dean was requested to intimate it to the bishop of the diocese, "as Preses of the Committee . . . and to beg of his Reverence to acquaint the other Members of the committee therewith." The clerk was "ordered to transmit an Extract of this Minute to the Deans of the other dioceses of the Church, to be by them laid before their Clergy for their consideration and concurrence, and request them to return to him the Resolutions they might respectively adopt relative thereto."

The synod met at six o'clock in the evening, and the dean "communicated the above Minutes of the Presbytery to the Bishop," who assured the synod that he and his fellow committee men would do their very utmost to comply with their request, and bring "the object . . . to a speedy and favourable issue."

Thus the Aberdeen clergy continued to stir up their brethren, and draw out support to the good cause from every diocese of the church.

Mr. James Allan Park visits Aberdeen.

The primus himself never ceased to labour in the cause. In the month after the synod (Sept., 1790), he had a visit from Mr. James Allan Park, one of the energetic three that formed the London committee. It is easy to conceive what a happy and profitable meeting this was. The two friends discussed the repeal business in all its phases, and Mr. Park assured the primus that the London committee would do everything that was possible to urge the bill forward at the first opportunity. During the same visit to Scotland Mr. Park was introduced to Principal Robertson, of Edinburgh, and received from that eminent ecclesiastic and author the fullest permission to make any use he chose of his name and influence in favour of the bill.* The primus received a like permission from the scarcely less distinguished Principal Campbell, of Aberdeen, who called upon him "of set purpose." These two eminent principals were both well known in England, and, as has been seen, both wrote letters in favour of relief to influential English friends.

Preparations for Session of 1791.

Meantime the home committee did what they

* "The Doctor (Webster) carried me to pay a visit to Principal Robertson, who gave me full power and authority to use his name to any people of Rank in England, whether in Church or State, as one of the Established Religion here, who think the Episcopal Communion well entitled to the relief they claim. . . . This convinced me that all our opposition in Scotland arises from the English-ordained Clergy, and not from the Establishment."—Letter of Mr. James Allan Park to Primus Skinner, Edinburgh, Sept. 29, 1790.

could by correspondence. Early in 1791 they wrote letters to all the English bishops "requesting the honour of their Lordships' powerful interest and support." Now also, as during the whole negotiations, the primus was ever ready to help in framing such a bill as the London committee and their parliamentary friends deemed likely to be acceptable to the chancellor, and other objectors.

Scotch Orders "inadmissible" in England.

As early as March 26, 1790, Bishop Horsley had assured the primus, through Dr. Gaskin, that no bill could have a chance of passing which, in any way and with whatever amount of safeguards, sanctioned the admission of a clergyman of Scotch orders to an English benefice. The primus had, on behalf of the home committee, drawn up, for insertion in the bill, a clause, whereby the induction of a Scotch priest should be made subject to the approval of the bishop of the diocese. He should not be "entitled to induction into any benefice within that realm [of England], unless it should appear expedient to the Bishop of the diocese within which such benefice lay." With a clause of this sort, Scotch clergymen might be admitted into some or excluded from all the dioceses of England, according as the different bishops might think good, or according to the merits of each applicant. But such a clause was declared to be "inadmissible." Bishop Horsley "gave me [Dr. Gaskin] his full and undisguised opinion, that such a clause as you had framed was inadmissible, and that if every Bishop

on the English Bench would give his consent to the introduction thereof, still he was confident it would not pass the Houses of Parliament."

The Element of Establishmentism essential to Admissible Orders.

The reason, of course, was the chancellor's notable objection, that the episcopacy of the Scotch bishops, though valid, was not a "legal" or regal "Episcopacy." No one knew better than Bishop Horsley how hollow and erastian this objection was, yet he laboured to show that there was in it an element of plausibility which would have great weight with the erastian-minded legislators of the time. "The King was in a sense the head of the English Church. . . . As King he knew nothing of such Bishops [as the Scotch], and our Bishops must not be allowed to give a civil effect in the Church of England to their letters of orders." This objection once started by the chancellor would tell with a certain class of senators. The cry for "protection" by the English clergy would tell with a still larger class.

Both committees had become convinced by these representations of such a tried friend as Bishop Horsley. They had ceased to hope or labour for a clause sanctioning the admission, under any safeguards, of a Scotch ordained pastor to an English living. They turned their attention to the removal of all the other obstacles to their bill, and, about the beginning of 1791, they had reason to believe that they had succeeded in their efforts. "Our friends

in London informed us that a conference had been obtained with the Lord Chancellor on the subject of our application, and a new Bill was to be framed, in such terms, as might be supposed to meet his Lordship's ideas."

The Bill again Postponed.

The London committee did their utmost to make good their words, and get the bill introduced. But in vain. "Owing to repeated delays, arising from unforseen causes, it was again too late in the Session before the Bill could be properly introduced into Parliament." The sessions of parliament closed at an early period in those days, sometimes about the middle of June; and, in a busy period, bills of no great public interest, like the Scotch disabilities repeal measure, were sure to be amongst the "slaughtered innocents." So, indeed, it turned out; but this was the last disappointment of the kind. The session of '91 was lost, but '92 was destined to witness the final (though modified) triumph of the cause.

The committees did not lose hope, but redoubled their efforts. In addition to former preparatory and precautionary measures, recourse was had to petitions to parliament. Several counties and royal burghs sent petitions in favour of the measure.

The Primus deputed to London.

When at last, in the spring of 1792, all seemed ready for successful action, the London committee suggested to the Scotch committee the propriety of

sending up one of their number to superintend the passage of the bill through parliament. Of course the primus, the preses of the committee, was asked to go. He consented, and was invested with full power to speak and act in the name of the committee.

CHAPTER IX.

The Primus arrives in London—Business—Bishop Horsley—Chancellor Thurlow's difficulties and requirements—His approaching Fall—Second Reading of Bill in the Lords—Speeches of Lords Elgin, Thurlow, and Stormont—Of Bishop Horsley and Lord Kinnoul—Bill passes second reading—Suggested alterations in Committee—Subscription of Articles—Other Restrictions—Bill in Committee—Thurlow's Dismissal—Bill in Commons—Lord Thurlow (Note).

PRIMUS Skinner arrived in London in the month of March (1792)—the sole agent and representative of his church in this its second appeal to the justice of parliament. He addressed himself at once to his task in his usual energetic style. The first two or three weeks he spent "in recommending the Bill to the most eminent Members of both Houses of Parliament"—naturally beginning with the Bishops.

Bishop Horsley.

Of these all apparently were very friendly in inclination and wish, but hardly more than one—Bishop Horsley—proved to be actively and energetically helpful. Horsley, however, was, in zeal, ability, and tact, "himself a host." He and Lord Kelly had been for some time "concerting measures for bringing the business forward," and smoothing the passage of the bill, by "long and zealously endeavouring to set the matter in a true light, and to remove prejudice and

mistaken apprehension." Above all, Horsley "had been at uncommon pains to make himself master of the subject, and of whatever related to the situation of the Scottish Episcopal Church." He knew the chancellor's objections, and he had carefully studied the church's history for answers to them, on every point, legal, political, and ecclesiastical, and, as will be seen, when the debate came on he proved himself *haud impar congressus Achilli.*

The Bill Introduced.

At the first introduction of the bill in this session of 1792, there seemed little likelihood of opposition. It was on April 2nd that the Earl of Kelly moved for leave to bring it in. "Two days after, the Bill was read a first time, without any appearance of opposition on the part of the Chancellor, who only observed that some alterations would be necessary." The bill was ordered to be printed, and brought forward after the Easter recess. The chancellor's opposition, however, only slumbered. He "had been mentioning such difficulties about the Bill as were not likely to be easily removed." This the primus learnt during the Easter recess. And "the first day on which the House of Lords met," after the recess, "a conversation was held on the subject, in the course of which the chancellor went over all his former ground of opposition."

The Chancellor's Difficulties and Requirements.

The great man had apparently as many difficulties and apprehensions as ever, and saw the necessity for

as many safeguards. There must be clauses to restrain the now loyal episcopalians from doing that which they had no longer any desire to do, and that for which the common law already supplied adequate restraints. There must be some special security that they should not offer "true allegiance" to some Stuart pretender, instead of to King George, and also claim for themselves "temporal ecclesiastical jurisdiction." The clergy must be bound to register their letters of orders, lest "all sorts of persons, even such as the blacksmith of Gretna Green, might assume the character of Episcopal Ministers, and celebrate marriages. . . . The Chancellor also seemed inclined to say something disagreeable about what he called the connexion of our Clergy with the Pretender, and had his doubts whether the Established Church of Scotland approved of our being put on an equal footing with the other Scottish Dissenters."

Bishop Horsley Consults the Primus.

Bishop Horsley replied to these objections as well as he could, but in order to be quite sure of the accuracy of his facts and the soundness of his arguments, before the debate came on, he applied to Primus Skinner for information on certain obscure points. He asked him "to set down in writing the fact, as it really stood," with regard to the connexion of the Scotch clergy "with the Pretender," and also to ask the leading ministers of the Established Church of Scotland for a renewal of their friendly assurances of goodwill to the relief cause. The primus promptly

complied, stating that the arrangements with the exiled prince as to the election of bishops were confined to a few appointments of the early part of the century—that the present bishops had "had no connexion with the exiled family," and that not only the bishops, but also the whole clergy, were now prepared to swear true allegiance to the reigning family. Further, that the church had never dreamt of any jurisdiction but *spiritual* jurisdiction, and sought for itself "only a share of that toleration which others so freely enjoyed."

Registration of Letters of Orders.

As to the registration of letters of orders, the clergy would make no difficulty, but here their parliamentary friends stept in, and objected to concession. They held that, "on the general principle of toleration, there was no necessity for inquiring into the nature of our orders;" but, in order "to remove all objections, it was suggested that the clergy might be described as 'Dissenters from the Established Church of Scotland, who style themselves Episcopalian Clergymen.'" The details of the bill were thus settled by the church's friends; and the eminent presbyterian ministers supplied the desiderated friendly assurances towards the bill on the part of themselves and their church. All therefore seemed now ready for action and debate; and there was an eager desire, on the part of its promoters, to press the bill forward, lest another session should be lost—a most natural, but, as the event showed, a very mistaken policy!

Thurlow on the Eve of his Fall.

Little did the good, single-minded men imagine, that if this, the fourth session, should be lost, it would be well lost! It would have left the way open for a better bill; it would have witnessed the practical clearing away from their path of their great and insuperable stumbling-block! It would have shown them the sudden and unceremonious hurling, from place and power, of the proud chancellor, who seemed entirely to dominate the upper house, and who had brought upon them all this weary three years' delay, disappointment, and trouble! But no one, at the time, believed such an event to be probable, though a few keen-sighted statesmen knew that it was possible.*

Second Reading of the Bill—Lord Elgin.

The bill was therefore proceeded with. On May 2nd, Lord Elgin moved the second reading "in a

* It seemed to be believed by many well-informed politicians, including the chancellor himself, that Thurlow was in such high favour with the king, that no wayward step he could take—not even open defiance of Pitt, the popular premier, could shake his position. But at least one eminent statesman showed that he knew better. Only a short time before the event took place, Lord North foretold the chancellor's fall, and the precise way and manner of its occurrence. He said to "a person peculiarly intimate with Lord Thurlow, 'Your friend thinks that his personal influence with the King authorises him to treat Mr. Pitt with *humeur*. Take my word for it, whenever Mr. Pitt says to the King, 'Sir, the Great Seal must be in other hands,' the King will take the Great Seal from Lord Thurlow, and never think any more about him.'"—Lord Campbell's "Chancellors," v., p. 605.

short but very sensible speech, stating the principle of the bill and the merits of those it was intended to relieve." The Scotch episcopalians, he argued, were now all good and loyal subjects, and as such, they were "entitled," on the ground of both justice and expediency, "to the relief which the Bill provided."

Thurlow's Speech.

When the earl sat down, the chancellor left the woolsack and addressed the house. His address, if it is at all correctly reported,* was in striking contrast with the concise, direct, and relevant speech of the mover. It was in the discursive roundabout style of a speaker who has not much confidence in his case, and keeps well away from the point. He "proceeded to take an extensive view of the subject, and entered into a variety of reasoning on the nature of a Church Establishment and the general principles of toleration. . . . In stating the nature of an Establishment, he endeavoured to show that it was absolutely necessary for the preservation of the Christian religion." The drift of his reasoning seemed to be, that the Scotch episcopalians should be constrained to accept as much state control as possible, with the view of keeping their faith sound, and guarding against such irregularities as clandestine marriages. By implication at least, he recommended that they should have their "pastors"

* "Annals of Scottish Episcopacy," p. 195, *seq.* The report of the debate, and of the whole London negotiations, which is contained in the "Annals," is, it need hardly be said, Bishop Skinner's own report, taken from his "Journal of Transactions in the Scotch Episcopal Church, from the first of March, 1788, to the beginning of 1814."

ordained, and, if need be, re-ordained by bishops of the English or Irish church. On every point, however, on which, in support of his argument, he ventured to cite history or law—especially Scotch history and Scotch law—he exposed his ignorance, and was flatly contradicted by the subsequent speakers, who were all thoroughly conversant with the subject. The chief points on which he was thus brought to book were—

1. The assertion that "before the time of Constantine it was not the practice of the Church to pray for kings."

2. That in the 10th of Queen Anne, the words "Pastors ordained by a Protestant Bishop" meant only clergymen ordained by bishops of either the English or the Irish established church.

3. That the possession, by the "pastors" of the Scotch episcopal church, of orders conferred by the bishops of an established church, could have any effect in securing greater regularity in the celebration of marriages in Scotland.

Lord Stormont.

The chancellor was followed by Lord Stormont, a Scotch peer, who, like all the other speakers, including Bishop Horsley, expressed great deference for the chancellor's judgment and authority. Yet his lordship by no means spared the great man's arguments. From his knowledge of Scotch law and practice, and the character of the "Episcopalian pastors," he showed that the chancellor was altogether at fault in his plans for the ordination of Scotch pastors, and his apprehen-

sions in regard to clandestine Scotch marriages. The "Episcopalian pastors" could not and would not submit to re-ordination, and, even if they would, he appealed to the bench of bishops if they could find any English or Irish bishop to ordain them ; and, as to marriages, "in Scotland marriage was regarded as merely a civil contract," to the validity of which the orders of the celebrant were, in the eye of the law, of no account.

Bishop Horsley.

Lord Stormont was followed by Bishop Horsley, who made the great speech of the debate. While corroborating the arguments of the previous speakers on the same side, and, like them, insisting on keeping to the point, Horsley, from his intimate knowledge of the church history of the period referred to, was able to point out distinctly all the chancellor's errors of fact and inference.

Antiquity of Prayer for Sovereigns.

1. As to "the antiquity of the practice of praying for sovereigns . . . his Lordship must have received some misinformation. . . . The precept of praying for Kings and all in authority was 300 years older than Constantine. It was the constant practice of the earliest Christians to pray even for the princes that persecuted them." The refusal of the Scotch episcopalians to pray for King George was "owing to their notions about indefeasible hereditary right," and not to the supposed example of the early church. This was altogether a mere temporary and exceptional cause, which had now ceased to operate.

Parliament had nothing to do with Scottish Orders.

2. Before proceeding to point out the untenableness of the chancellor's interpretation of the words "protestant Bishops" in the 10th of Queen Anne, as meaning necessarily and only the bishops of an established church, Horsley protested against the whole of this reasoning as to the validity of the orders of the Scotch bishops, as entirely irrelevant to the question before the house. It had nothing to do with "the merits of the Bill. . . . The single question was, 'are these Scottish Episcopalians good subjects?' and, he added, in the Chancellor's own words, do they hold religious opinions 'fit to be tolerated?' No one ever asked, no one had a right to ask an English dissenting minister, 'What are your orders?' No one, when it was a question of toleration, had a right to ask these Scotch Episcopalians as to their orders. And as for their religious opinions, 'the cause of their difference from the Established Church of Scotland was their very near agreement with the Established Church of England!' They were surely, in every way, 'fit to be tolerated!'"

Scotch "protestant bishops" in Queen Anne's time.

3. But even supposing this question of orders were relevant, would the chancellor's interpretation of Queen Anne's act support his view of it? Was there any ground for that interpretation? Did it accord with

the history and circumstances of the time, or even with the terms of the act? Of all this, the chancellor seemed to know nothing; the bishop shewed that he knew everything—knew all the circumstances of the church at the time; what the number of bishops was, and how many of them were "ejected" bishops and how many were of the "new consecration." Of the thirteen bishops who were ejected at the revolution from the fourteen sees, four were "alive and within the Kingdom" at the passing of the act. There were also four of the "new consecration." Thus there was exactly the same number of the one class as of the other, and if it was intended that the one class should be tolerated and the other "excluded," surely this intention would have been expressed in the act. The bishops of the succession, therefore—the present bishops—were as much "protestant Bishops" in the meaning of the act as the ejected bishops. Their orders were equally valid.

Scotch Orders the only Orders for Scotland.

But granting that their orders were *not* valid, and that nothing short of the orders conferred by an established bishop should suffice, where were such orders to be obtained? Certainly not from England. No English or Irish bishop could ordain on a Scotch title. "The thing would be contrary to all rule and order. . . . An appointment," added the bishop, "to an Episcopal charge in Scotland, is no more a title to me or any Bishop in England, than an appointment to a Church in Mesopotamia."

Clandestine Marriages.

4. As to the fear that the bill, in its present form, would "open a door to clandestine marriages," this was altogether groundless. There would be, in truth, as shown by previous speakers, no change whatever in the law and practice as to marriage. The bill, indeed, authorised the episcopal clergy to marry, but only to marry "those whose banns had already been published, not only in the Meeting Houses, but also in the Kirks of the Parish where the parties are resident." Nay, further, the bill gave them "no authority with respect to marriages but what they do already enjoy and exercise. These Episcopalians do now solemnize marriages every day. They solemnize marriages legally . . . and their marriages are good and valid by the laws of Scotland."

The bishop concluded by saying that he "would not go into points that had not been brought forward in objection, though he was prepared to meet any other objection that might be moved."

Lord Kinnoul.

The debate might have terminated here, the argument being all on one side and every objection having been met, but a short and graceful addition was made to it by Lord Kinnoul, who, "with much emphasis and energy . . . described the members of the Scottish Episcopal Church as a decent, quiet, respectable body of people, who, in the most trying times, had always

behaved in a very becoming and exemplary manner, and were therefore entitled to every indulgence.

The Bill passes the Second Reading.

The second reading of the bill was then agreed to without a division. The principle was thus accepted, and there was little risk of many changes being moved in committee. It was, in fact, "intimated to" the primus, after the debate, by his parliamentary friends, "that the only thing which the Lord Chancellor now insisted on was the necessity of requiring from our clergy some public declaration of their religious principles, by which it might be known that they came as near as was said to those of the Church of England."

Subscription of the Articles.

Thurlow suggested subscription of the XXXIX. articles as the best means of meeting this requirement. Bishop Horsley "saw the justice and propriety of the chancellor's remarks" on this matter, and recommended compliance. "It was argued" that a clause embodying the requirement was "not only just and reasonable in itself, but might be attended with consequences very advantageous to the Scottish Episcopal Church," which had then no known standard whatever. The primus urged some obvious objections, but eventually he agreed to the insertion of the clause. He was assured that "it was only the general doctrine of the several articles to which the subscription was required, even in England;" and so he gave in to the opinion

of the "London committee, and of all those friends of our cause on whose good offices the success of our Bill depended."

Other Restrictive Clauses.

It had been already understood that the bill must contain a clause requiring every clergyman to take the oath of abjuration, and another prohibiting clergymen of Scottish ordination from "taking any curacy, benefice, or other spiritual promotion, within that part of Great Britain called England, &c."

The Bill in Committee.

By the concessions which the parliamentary friends of the bill had made, all risk of its rejection had now vanished. The bill passed through the committee on the 15th of May. On that day some things happened which, if they had only been foreseen some time previously by the promoters of the bill, the result would have probably been very different.

The Blot of the Bill.

The clause debarring clergymen of Scotch ordination from admission to English livings, was objected to in a blunt, commonsense fashion, by Lord Radnor, who said "he saw no good reason for refusing that to clergymen ordained by a Protestant Bishop which was granted to Popish priests." This hit the blot of the bill in a way that would have told upon the house, had the house not still been bestridden by Thurlow, as by

"a Colossus," and altogether ignorant that the Colossus was at that very moment tottering to its fall! As it was, Bishop Horsley, the great champion of the bill, as if to avert the great man's wrath, came forward and urged the usual erastian explanation of "the distinction between a spiritual and a legal episcopacy," and he added, that it was only "Popish priests who had been ordained by *Bishops legally established* in foreign countries," who could, on conforming to Anglicanism, be admitted to an English living. If the House had not had before its eyes the fear of Lord Thurlow, it would not probably have so readily recognised the potency of the establishment element in a question of orders.

Thurlow's Dismissal.

Neither the house, nor the ministry, nor the country, had, at the moment, any idea whatever that this was in reality Thurlow's last day of place and power! It was on this very fifteenth of May, 1792, that Thurlow, without the slightest previous hint to his colleagues of disapproval or opposition, attempted to throw out Pitt's famous sinking-fund bill — an attempt which he knew would, if successful, have thrown out the ministry. But, while "attempting murder, he only succeeded in committing suicide." Next day Pitt wrote him, that he had submitted to his majesty his opinion "of the impossibility of his Majesty's service being carried on to advantage while your Lordship and myself continue in our present situations." The king immediately, as Lord North had foretold, "caused intimation to be made to Lord

Thurlow, that 'his Majesty had no longer any occasion for his services.'" * For the public convenience, Thurlow was permitted to hold the great seal till the day of prorogation, in order that he might "give judgments in causes that had been argued before him." His power, however, was gone. Yet his fall came too late for the interests of the bill, which, on this 16th of May, was reported, read a third time, and "ordered to be carried to the House of Commons."

Bill in the Commons.

But for a merely technical irregularity, it would have speedily passed the house of commons, where it never encountered any difficulty. When the second reading was proposed, the speaker called attention to the fact, that, as the bill contained some money clauses, it ought to have been introduced into the house of commons first. In order to remedy this mistake, it was necessary to commence *de novo*—pass the bill through all its stages in the commons, and then a second time through all its stages in the Lords. This was done with as little delay as possible. Yet the bill did not receive the royal assent till the 15th of June, the last day of the session, and the last day of Chancellor Thurlow's tenure (even by sufferance) of the great seal!

Striking but Unhappy Coincidence.

The church's evil genius, as Thurlow may be not unjustly termed, was permitted, by a striking coinci-

* Lord Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," v., 604.

dence of events, to dominate the house of lords just as long as and no longer than it was possible to do harm to the bill. Had he been dismissed even a single day earlier, the bill might have been a much better bill. But the relief came too late. What had been done could not be undone. Parliament had been committed. As the primus, on his return, told the church in convention, all Thurlow's "alterations had been agreed to, and the Bill wanted nothing but the third reading—a mere form—" and had to be accepted, as it was; and though it was burdened with needless and vexatious restrictions, it was still a substantial and acceptable measure of justice. The primus was grateful for it, and he found that, as a body, the long outlawed and harrassed little church was not less grateful.

NOTE TO CHAPTER IX.

LORD THURLOW.

The writer believes that he has in no degree overstated the malign influence exerted by Lord Thurlow on the relief bills. It seems clear from the history that, but for his determined opposition, the first relief bill would have passed the lords as speedily and as easily as it passed the commons, and that the church would thus have obtained relief, and relief unhampered by vexatious and needless restrictions, three years earlier than it did attain it by the maimed and crippled bill of 1792. But the surly, arrogant, impracticable temper which vexed and shackled the poor persecuted churchmen of the north suddenly worked their persistent tormentor's own ruin, as it were, before their eyes. It is difficult, in these days, to comprehend the object of such a seemingly reckless attempt as that of Lord Thurlow to wreck, by a sudden and treacherous stroke, the powerful ministry of the popular Pitt. But politically there is, as has been already observed, a great difference between now and then. A hundred years ago the crown was much more powerful; the premier and the parliament were both considerably less

powerful both in cabinet-making and in cabinet-mending. A minister who was in high favour at court, as Thurlow was, was accustomed to consider and speak of himself as "the King's" minister, and affected to be practically independent of the premier. So much was this the case with Thurlow,* that he evidently believed that so long as he possessed the king's favour he might do very much as he liked in parliament; the king would part with Pitt rather than with him. As has been seen, he had a rude awakening from this arrogant delusion. His dismissal followed instantly on Pitt's complaint, and it was very unceremonious. He was "surprised that the King had parted so easily with him." His fall was as complete and final as it was sudden. Though his party continued in power, and he was able and eager for office, he never seems to have had even a chance of restoration to office. After a time, feeling himself without weight or influence in the house, he ceased, except at rare intervals, to attend parliament at all.

* See Chapter VI.

CHAPTER X.

Gifts to Members of London Committee—Primus returns home—Letter from members of Home Committee—Recouping of Primus—Reassembles Convention—Convention meets at Laurencekirk—Primus's address—Reception of same—Church and Convention at one as to Primus's conduct of mission—Financial objects of Convention—Widows' Fund—Friendly Society—Great Success of this society—Aberdeen as headquarters of same—(Note).

Gifts to Members of London Committee.

NO sooner was the parliamentary struggle at an end than the primus prepared to return to Scotland to report to the church with the relief act in his hand. But first, in the church's name, he endeavoured to make some fit acknowledgment to the excellent and most zealous members of the London committee. To each of the three he presented a small "token of gratitude, esteem, and respect." To Dr. Gaskin and Mr. Allan Park the gift was a "polished vase-shaped silver cup and cover, with a rich engraved border," bearing an inscription commemorating the gratitude of "the Episcopal Church of Scotland relieved from Penal Statutes." The third member, Mr. William Stevens, being "a bachelor,* preferred a

* As a bachelor, Mr. Stevens could enjoy a joke at the expense of his benedict friends. Writing to Bishop Skinner, Oct. 29, 1789, he

literary token of gratitude." The primus, therefore, "presented this invaluable man with a copy of 'Brunckerii Historia Critica Philosophiæ,' neatly bound in six quarto volumes, with an inscription similar to that on the cups."

The kindly recipients all expressed the highest appreciation of these tokens of gratitude for their inestimable labour of love. Dr Gaskin, with whom the primus had lived during the whole time of his stay in London on this occasion, said, in acknowledging his gift—"The opportunity of entertaining, under my roof, the Bishop of Aberdeen, which this business afforded me, I reckon among the most honourable and pleasant circumstances of my life. I shall preserve the cup with great veneration, and endeavour that it may continue to be preserved, when I shall be removed hence."

Returns Home—Reassembles Convention.

The primus now returned to Scotland, where he met with a very warm and flattering reception. Soon after his return he received (July 4th, 1792) a letter from three members of the home committee, which decided him as to the mode in which he should report to the church the result of his mission. The regular

says "Mr. Boucher I have not seen for some months. When I was on a journey in the West he went into the North, from whence he is not to return till the middle of November; when he purposes bringing a companion with him—being so *desperate*, as a friend observed to me in a letter, as to *venture* upon a third wife."—Unpublished letter in the Wilson collection.

course would have been to report to the committee of delegates, who would, in turn, have reported to the convention, by which they had been appointed. But the committee, who doubtless knew all the particulars already, did not seem to think it necessary that they should meet. The object of the three committee-men in writing the primus was, to suggest to him that he should call another convention "similar to that with which their powers originated," and, at the same time, to solicit from every congregation in the church a contribution towards a defrayal of the expenses of the relief bill.

Recouping of Primus.

No doubt "the defrayal of the expenses" was the main object of these members of committee in seeking to hasten the meeting of the convention. This was done out of consideration to the primus, who had paid all the expenses out of his own pocket. But the primus, with his usual energy and tact, so managed matters, that even this important object became only the secondary financial achievement of the meeting. He conjoined, with the passing object of payment of the bill, the great and lasting object of the establishment of a fund for the widows and children of the clergy, which has developed into one of the most successful and beneficent institutions of the church.

Convention to meet at Laurencekirk.

The convention was fixed to meet at Laurencekirk on Wednesday, August 22nd, 1792, and in the circular

calling the meeting, the chief items of business were given as follows :—

1. To receive the committee's (or the primus's) report ;

2. To draw up an address to the king ;

3. To establish a fund for "the widows and children of Episcopal Clergymen."

Before the convention met, the primus completed the work of thanksgiving and acknowledgment, which he had begun in London, by writing, in the name of the committee, letters of thanks, which were signed by every member of the committee, to all the statesmen and ecclesiastics who had helped on the work of repeal. Most of the letters elicited graceful replies, and some of these, Bishop Horsley's in particular, are very interesting.

Meeting—Address of Primus.

When the convention met, August 22nd, the primus, as in the previous Laurencekirk convention, was called to the chair, and the Rev. Roger Aitken, Aberdeen, was appointed clerk. The proceedings were very harmonious. The minutes of the committees were read, and then the primus, as president, and as the London agent of the committee, delivered a long address, in which he explained the main provisions of the bill, and indicated the chief causes which had operated "to prevent the attainment of such a measure as they had been, at one time, led to expect."

It will suffice to indicate, in the order most conducive to convenience and brevity, the chief points on which the primus touched—

1. The bill completely freed the laity. They were "fully exempted from all pains and penalties;" and the primus appealed to the convention whether it had not been "the general and unchanged language of the whole body of Scottish Episcopal Clergy," when opposition arose, that if the laity were only thus exempted and "set free to attend their ministrations without disqualification of any sort, they would, one and all, be satisfied," and trust to the leniency of the government for toleration to themselves.

2. But "the Clergy themselves are also placed in a far more eligible situation." The penalties for non-compliance with the act were greatly lighter.

II. There were in the act, however, certain serious obstacles to compliance—certain more or less vexatious and uncalled for requirements and restrictions, which it had been found impossible "to escape."

1. The oath of abjuration, which had reference to the past, and which they could not take with a good conscience. He (the primus) and all the church's friends had stood out to the utmost against the imposition of this oath, but to no purpose, for "here it was that the Lord Chancellor of England fixed his foot."

2. The signing of the XXXIX. articles. This was another of Thurlow's requirements, but it was not objected to by the English friends of the bill, and certainly there could be "no hardship in the Clergy being required to acknowledge that the Articles were agreeable to the Word of God."

3. The debarring clergy of Scotch ordination from holding an English living, or even regularly officiating

in England. This, which was then generally regarded as the chief of the disabilities, and in no long time as the only one, seemed to the primus a matter of comparative indifference. He was "at a loss to determine whether they had or had not reason to complain of it. Time would show how it was likely to operate." Anyhow, it had to be submitted to, for, said the primus, "I feel no hesitation in affirming, that we had not the most distant chance at the time of escaping it. . . . It did not originate in the humour or caprice of a single member of Administration." Parliament, as a body, plainly desired to keep the English livings to the English clergy, "and to them only." *

* There was no real necessity that parliament should pass a restrictive clause to secure this object. It was amply secured already by the existing law, which, by not recognising Scotch orders, prevented them from having "any civil effect in England." A clergyman of Scotch orders, though presented to an English living, had no legal claim to it. This fact was admitted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and others as a sufficient safeguard to the interests of the English clergy, while the first bill was passing through the commons. But when once Thurlow suggested a positive prohibition, "Parliament, as a body," stood out for it, and clenched it by an additional clause, which prohibited a clergyman of Scotch orders from even *officiating* in an English church. It seems clear that even Bishop Horsley, who became eventually the chief parliamentary advocate of repeal, was from the first averse to Scotch orders being admitted "as qualifications for institution in the English church," and stood out for a restrictive clause. After the first bill had been thrown out, Dr. Gaskin met him at Cambridge, and the Dr. informed Bishop Skinner in a letter (January 12, 1791) that "upon introducing the topic of your application to parliament, I was surprised to find his lordship ill-informed in your affairs, and rather prejudiced. . . . He was in the house when your bill was thrown out, and appears (inter nos) to have acted at the nod of the chancellor, without considering thoroughly and impartially what they were about. The great particular at which the bishop seemed to me to rest was, that *it would*

The primus concluded his address with an emphatic and most true declaration for himself and "those associated with him in the late Parliamentary application," "that in every stage of them, whatever our hands or our hearts found it necessary to be done, we did it with all our might—with all the zeal, talent and energy which we possessed, and with a single eye to the interests of our society"—(Annals, 254).

Reception of Primus's Address.

Nothing could be more satisfactory than the reception accorded to this address. When he concluded, the primus, "on motion to that effect," left the chair. The convention then formed itself into a general committee, with Dean Rose of Brechin in the chair, and "unanimously approved of what had been done." It then appointed a sub-committee "to draw up a Minute of thanks to the Committee of Delegates and its Preses."

The committee resolved unanimously—

1. "That the Committee of Delegates had conducted itself with great diligence and prudence, &c."

2. "That no part of its conduct was more judicious than the appointment of its Right Rev. Preses to the office of Delegate to superintend the business in London."

3. "That the said Delegate exerted himself to the utmost in the discharge of his duty, and obtained the

not be right to admit your letters of orders as qualifications for institution in our church, and he appeared to conceive that the late bill did not include a sufficient guard against that which he judged to be an evil."

best Bill which, in the present circumstances, could be expected," &c.

Church and Convention at one.

Here was the most ample and emphatic recognition of the primus's faithful services at this critical juncture; and history abundantly proves that in this fervent and graceful tribute to him, the voice of the church in convention was the voice of the church at large.

Financial Objects of Convention.

Not less gratifying to the primus was the outcome of the secondary or financial object of the convention. The church had responded fairly well to the call for contributions towards the expenses of the bill, raising in all a sum of £305 0s. 9d. The parliamentary expenses amounted to £213 12s.

Widows' Fund.

There was thus a balance of £91 8s. 9d; no great sum, but yet it was invaluable as a nucleus for the fund for widows and children of the clergy, to which the primus had destined it. He now proposed, and the convention unanimously agreed, that it should be applied to that purpose. Accordingly the money was, with this view, "deposited in the hands of the primus, in order to be laid out at interest." But formally, at least, it was agreed that this arrangement should only be provisional. All the congregations in

the church had not contributed, and it was resolved to put pressure upon the defaulters. A resolution was adopted, and doubtless duly communicated to the defaulters, that unless a majority of the latter should contribute, the proposal would not take effect, and the "foresaid balance" would be returned to the contributors "in proportion to the respective sums advanced by each." Should "the outstanding congregations," however, duly contribute, the primus, "jointly with his Right Rev. Colleagues," was instructed to apply the money to the purpose agreed upon—"forming and establishing a fund" such as was most likely to be "permanent and efficient." The spur to "the outstanding congregations" at once proved effectual, though it may be safely assumed that the primus would never have allowed his excellent scheme to fall through in consequence of the neglect or indifference of a few congregations. The call was responded to—the fund got a good start, was well invested, and quickly developed into a "permanent and efficient" institution.

Institution of Friendly Society.

Circumstances favoured its development. The very next year (1793) parliament passed an act for the encouragement of friendly societies. The primus, who was ever on the watch for practical improvements, saw quickly that the conversion of the managing body of the widows' fund into a friendly society, under government sanction and surveillance, was a certain way to ensure the efficiency and permanence of the institution. He was ably supported, as usual, by his

diocesan synod, and he speedily brought over the whole church to his views. The matter was taken up by the Aberdeen synod of August 21, 1793,* and the result of the discussion was that the clerk (the Rev. Roger Aitken) was "empowered" by the bishop and synod "to submit the matter to the other Bishops and Clergy throughout the Church, who, with one or two exceptions, cordially approved of the measure." The clerk was, therefore, further instructed to "lose no time in drawing up the necessary Articles and Rules, and circulating the same for the correction and approbation of those who meant to join 'the Scottish Episcopal Friendly Society.'"

A draught of rules was therefore prepared, printed, and "forwarded to all concerned," with a notification from the primus, that a general meeting of "such Bishops and Clergy as had a desire to become Members of the Society, would be holden at Aberdeen, for the purpose of sanctioning the said Articles in terms of law."

First Meeting of Friendly Society.

The meeting was held, as announced, at Aberdeen, November 19th, 1793, and the assembled clergy formed themselves into a friendly society, in terms of the act of parliament. They then discussed the proposed articles or rules, which had been circulated amongst them, and, after making some slight alterations, they caused a clean copy of them to be written

* See "Annals of Scottish Episcopacy," p. 271. This part of the business is not entered in the minute book of the diocese of Aberdeen.

out. This was signed by the preses and clerk, and then "ordered to be presented to the Justices of Peace, for confirmation." The rules were confirmed on December 16th, 1793.

Great Success and Value of the Friendly Society.

Thus was established, chiefly by the exertions of Bishop Skinner, a society, which was the first and for long the only financial success of the church. The society has always been well managed, and from the very first it did great good, supplying a much felt want. The clergy then were almost all extremely poor, and had difficulty in providing for the passing needs of their families. The society relieved them of a load of anxiety as to the future, ensuring, as it did, a certain, though a small, provision for their widows or their orphan children.

Till the establishment of this society, there was no regular or certain provision of the sort. There was a small and irregularly administered fund, from which a widow or orphan occasionally obtained a dole of six or eight crowns, or two or three pounds sterling. But there was no fixed or certain, far less an adequate, allowance. From the first, however, this society, at the trifling annual outlay of £2 for 10 years, or in all £20, insured for a member an annuity of £10 a year to his widow, for her whole lifetime, or a sum of £100 to his orphan family. The annual payments of members could have done but little to maintain even those very moderate allowances. But the society soon had, at its disposal,

a considerable sum from yearly interest on its capital fund, which it steadily amassed from donations and legacies, that came in very freely as the value of the society became apparent.

How Legacies were Attracted.

How this came about was well illustrated by an incident of the period, which was recalled at a recent meeting of the society by one of the older members —the late Rev. Alexander Low, Longside. A gentleman in the Longside district had pointed out to him, in the village of Longside, a small cottage in which the widow of a member of the friendly society had lived for many years, with no other fixed or certain support than the ten pounds a year which she received from the society. The gentleman was so impressed with this instance of the usefulness of the society, that he instantly added to his will a codicil, by which he bequeathed £500 to the society. The society continued for 23 years, under the presidency of the primus, and after that for 40 years, under that of his son, Bishop William Skinner. It steadily prospered. Before 1818 it had, without increasing the amount or the number of a member's payments, raised a widow's annuity to £20 per annum, and the allowance to an orphan family to £200. For a considerable time back its yearly annuity to a widow has been £40, and its allowance to an orphan family £400 ; in other words, it gives now to a widow and to a family just four times as much as it gave at first.

NOTE TO CHAPTER X.

THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

The fact that this society holds, and by its rules always must hold, its meetings at Aberdeen, is a fact which is very significant as to the change which has come over the church within the last hundred years. When the society was established, Aberdeen was the headquarters and the centre of power and influence in the church. It was the see of the presiding bishop, and leading spirit in every church enterprise. It was the city where the great majority of the native clergy received their academical education. It was also the chief city of the only diocese, in which then, and for fifty years after, diocesan business was done in a regular and business-like way. Aberdeen, therefore, though in the north-east corner of the land, was then the natural seat and centre of power in the little church.

THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS.

The writer has not been able to ascertain the name of the widow who lived on ten pounds a year, in the little hut in Longside village. In those days the widows and orphans even of parish ministers were sometimes but slenderly provided for, and were fain to put up with very humble house accommodation. About forty years ago the two daughters of a parish minister lived in a tumble-down hut about three miles from Monymusk. Apparently they were quite contented, and to the last they retained a high idea of their own claims to "gentility." One day the newly-appointed parish minister called upon them, and began to talk about a young medical man, who, on his recommendation, had paid them a visit. "Dr. T.," said one of them, "is a gentleman. We like that; *we're gentles oorsel's*."

CHAPTER XI.

1792-1796.

Hard Conditions of Relief Act—Oath of Abjuration—Signing of the XXXIX. Articles—Projected Reforms—Episcopal Synod at Stonehaven—Its three Articles—Laid before Aberdeen Synod—Part of larger scheme—Church at large neglects them—Aberdeen Synod grapples with them—Drafts a set of Scotch Articles—Not needed—Prospect of re-union—Premature attempt—Dr. Boucher proposed for See of Edinburgh—Primus makes mistakes in pushing his candidature—Alarm amongst Presbyterians—Failure paves the way to Success—Primus refuses to confirm election of Bishops—Dr. Gleig—Mr. Jolly—Coadjutor of Moray and Ross—Primus's opposition in Jolly's case over-ruled—This act not illegal—The effects—On general Church affairs—On Primus himself.

FROM the hardness of its terms the relief act only half accomplished relief. It set the laity indeed free from all restrictions and disabilities, but on the clergy it imposed conditions which, as a body, they could not accept.

The Oath of Abjuration.

The clergy were now quite loyal—quite ready to pay "true allegiance" to the House of Hanover for the present and for the future, but for the past they could not answer.

"Not Heaven itself upon the past hath power."

They could not, with a safe conscience, swear that Jacobitism had been wrong and unwarranted in the past. To require them to do so, after they had already abjured it in the present, has always appeared to the present writer an act of the same uncalled for and wantonly provocative character as that which led to a recent bloody continental war.

The XXXIX. Articles.

The requirement to sign the XXXIX. articles was much less unwarranted or oppressive, though it was also uncalled for and entirely inconsistent with true religious freedom. In general the clergy had little objection to compliance. A few of the ablest and most learned of them, such as Messrs. Skinner and Gleig, objected to the teaching of the articles on certain points, such as original sin, and the eternal generation of the Son. Most or all of them objected to the article on predestination, and generally in proportion as they were given to speculation they disliked being tied down to particular explanations of mysterious doctrines.

It is not likely, however, that, if it had stood alone, the signing of the articles would have long blocked the way to compliance. The oath of abjuration was the chief stumbling block.

Projected Reforms.

Without compliance with the requirements of the relief bill the church could make but little solid pro-

gress. Primus Skinner, however, could not rest without attempting to push forward improvements. He did so in every way that was open to him—through the episcopal synod, and through his own diocesan synod. He seems to have thought it necessary for the satisfaction of government that the clergy should, at once, sign either the 39 articles or some other set of articles of their own, and that no time should be lost in preparing for any demand that government might make for the desiderated proof that they were "fit to be tolerated."

The signing of the articles, coupled as that requirement was with the abjuration oath, appears to have been generally regarded as, at that time, out of the question. Some substitute must therefore be found for it.

Episcopal Synod.

At an episcopal synod which met at Stonehaven (Sept. 20, 1792), three articles were proposed "for future discussion," which were meant not only to satisfy the governmental requirement, but also to accomplish some much needed home reforms. From what appears in the subsequent history, it seems clear that these "Articles" were suggested by the primus, and that none of the other bishops took much interest in them.

The Articles were as follows:—

I. A declaration of the principles of the church, with regard to the fundamental articles of the Christian religion.

II. A revisal of canons, with such alterations and additions as may form a complete ecclesiastical constitution; and also of the liturgy, so as to adapt it more fully to the state of the church and to the edification of its members.

III. A larger catechism than that of the Church of England, for the instruction of young people; and such directions as may serve to introduce a greater uniformity of practice in performing the several duties of the pastoral office.

These "Articles" the bishops agreed to "recommend to the Clergy of their several districts," and "to request their assistance in preparing and digesting proper plans for improvement, which might afterwards be submitted to the consideration of a National Synod."

Aberdeen Synod and the Articles.

The primus lost no time in carrying out the resolution of the episcopal synod. He laid a copy of the "Articles" before the synod of Aberdeen, which met Nov. 7, 1792, and directed that each member should be supplied with a copy. He then "explained more fully the nature of what was proposed," and asked the clergy to "communicate to him, in writing, whatever improvements might occur to them in the celebration of worship," &c.

Articles part of Wider Scheme.

It is clear that it was contemplated at this time to proceed with a comprehensive scheme of reform, embracing the whole church system—articles of faith,

canons, services, catechisms, &c. The bishops doubtless looked on such a scheme rather as a programme of the work which fell to be done by the church when it was quite free to act, than as a task which could be wholly accomplished at once. The scheme, as a whole, was to be kept in view and "discussed."

Church ill-fitted to "discuss."

As a body the church was, as yet, in no condition to deal effectually with such a difficult task. Most of the dioceses were but scantily supplied with clergy, and very imperfectly organized. The diocesan synods met very irregularly, and when they did meet they were often, from the absence of the bishop, "presbyteries" rather than synods. Then within the church there were two parties, the Hutchinsonians and the anti-Hutchinsonians; and without there were the English, or qualified congregations, which it was desirable to bring in, and whose views and tastes it was therefore expedient to consider in every step that was taken.

Aberdeen Clergy grapple with Scheme.

Effective action was thus difficult at the time, and, so far as appears, Aberdeen was the only diocese where a serious attempt at action was made. As has been said, the matter was duly laid by the bishop before the synod of Aberdeen at its meeting in 1792. At the next meeting (August 21, 1793), the bishop "called the attention of the Clergy to the review of the Canons and Liturgy, which had been recommended

to them." The clergy, it appeared, had done nothing as yet. "The matter appeared to require deep investigation, and to be attended with circumstances of difficulty and delicacy;" and they "requested that the diet on that business (might) be continued to the next Synod." By next synod (August 20, 1794), a substantial instalment of the work had been accomplished.

Draft of Articles.

"A Draft of Articles of Religion" was produced, and laid before the synod. This draft was written, as is well known, by the primus's father, John Skinner of Linshart, doubtless at the request of the bishop and synod. It was not accepted by the synod, however, without "a considerable debate," and "many alterations and amendments were approved of." When revised to the mind of the synod the draft was "ordered to be transmitted to the other dioceses for their consideration." This was duly done, but, as appears from the minute of next synod (August 19, 1795), "no return" was "made" by the other dioceses. And, so far as appears, there never was any return made by them. Very probably none of them ever seriously grappled with the "difficult and delicate" subject. In addition to their want of business habits, there was a reason of ever-growing strength why they should at least postpone consideration of the matter.

Scotch Articles not needed.

As time wore on it became more and more evident that it would be unwise for the church to hurry on a

decision in the matter of a doctrinal standard. On the one hand there was no pressure for action on the part of the government, and on the other the prospect of re-union with the separated brethren steadily brightened. The more that re-union became probable the less desirable was the project of a Scotch standard. Primus Skinner was the last man to do anything wittingly to imperil re-union, but in his eagerness to promote it he probably did something to retard it.

Premature Attempt at Re-union.

In the year 1793 the primus endeavoured to bring about a re-union through the influence of the qualified clergy of Edinburgh. He believed, no doubt justly, that these gentlemen and their congregations had great influence with the other qualified congregations throughout the country, and that if the Edinburgh churchmen would come over, the country congregations would soon follow them. He therefore essayed to bring over the Edinburgh clergy by trying to procure the appointment of a clergyman in English orders to the see of Edinburgh. It was a good idea, and eventually it was realised, but the first attempt was a failure.

Primus made some mistakes.

The scheme was one which, at that time, was very difficult of accomplishment, and in carrying it out the primus made some not unnatural mistakes. He did not invite the Edinburgh clergy to choose a bishop for themselves, but looked out one for them himself—

one after his own heart; and then he did not make sure beforehand that his candidate was in a position to hold an unendowed see. The candidate whom the primus selected was his friend, and the friend of all his English and American friends, the refugee loyalist, Jonathan Boucher, vicar of Epsom—a very excellent man, but, as a high churchman of the Hutchinsonian type, better suited ecclesiastically for the latitude of Aberdeen than for that of Edinburgh.

Alarm amongst Presbyterians.

When the appointment was first spoken of, the usual "alarm" or "clamour" was raised, that the object was "to introduce Bishops into Scotland, with the sanction of the Government, and on such legal footing, as to entitle them to some legal jurisdiction."* The Annalist of Scottish Episcopacy attributes to this absurd clamour the abandonment of the scheme. It probably had (as will be seen) some slight indirect influence in the matter, but the direct influences were quite sufficient to account for the failure of the scheme. These did not arise from any absurd and groundless clamour, but from solid, substantial objections on the part of the constituents, and of the candidate himself.

Real Obstacles—Edinburgh Clergy and Mr. Boucher.

The Edinburgh English clergy objected to the appointment, and the candidate himself, "from the beginning," intimated that he could not accept it

* "Annals of Scottish Episcopacy," p. 268.

unless he could first secure, for his maintenance, some adequate piece of English preferment—some sinecure, or office of some sort, with light duty, and pay equivalent to the value of the vicarage which he must resign. It was proposed that in the event of his appointment as bishop, Mr. Boucher should officiate as one of the clergymen of the Cowgate chapel. But the emoluments of that charge were doubtless greatly inferior to those of the vicarage of Epsom. These facts all come out clearly in an unpublished correspondence, now lying before the writer, between the primus and Mr. Boucher's very intimate friend, Mr. William Stevens. The Edinburgh English clergy, Mr. Stevens says, "never showed goodwill to the measure," and he states (Letter, June 4th, 1794), on the authority of Sir William Forbes, that "the English clergy were at the top and bottom of the clamour."

Mr. Boucher's Condition of acceptance.

As to the condition of acceptance which Mr. Boucher made, Mr. Stevens writes (April 6th, 1793), "Without some countenance from hence, which perhaps is not easy to be had, he could not, in prudence, think of adopting the plan; for having an increasing family, he could not resign his present preferment without some sinecure given instead of it, his fortune, though comfortable, not being equal to that sacrifice." A year after (April, 1794), Mr. Stevens writes, "He has declared, from the beginning, he was not in a situation to go to Scotland, without preferment obtained in England, which it seems he cannot have.

For Lord Kellie, whom I met the other day, told me, it has been determined that, by the late Act, the receiving of consecration in the Scotch Episcopal Church, would render him incapable of preferment in the English Church." Mr. Stevens goes on to assume that "as Mr. Boucher cannot have the sanction and countenance of our hierarchy, . . . that part of the scheme for union must fall to the ground."

The Edinburgh promoters of the scheme quite understood and approved this prudent caution. Mr. Stevens (Letter to primus, December 19th, 1793) quotes Sir William Forbes, the most influential Edinburgh layman, as writing to Mr. Boucher, that he did "not wish him (Mr. Boucher) to take a part [in the scheme] without the sanction of our [the English] hierarchy, or to the prejudice of his family."

Caution of the English Hierarchy.

Apart altogether from the legal obstacle referred to by Lord Kellie, it is possible that the clamour that was raised about "temporal jurisdiction," may have deterred the English hierarchy from doing anything to facilitate Mr. Boucher's translation to Edinburgh. But more probably (judging from Mr. Stevens' letter) the true cause of their inaction was their own somewhat cold caution, and the apparent inability, of even the ablest amongst them, to understand the true state of ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland. It seems difficult to comprehend how such a churchman as Bishop Horsley could have written as he did about the proposed union of the English and Scotch episcopal congrega-

tions in Scotland," "as an extraordinary project, to which he saw insuperable objections." * Everything, in fact, concurred to prove that the primus had pushed this matter prematurely ; and Mr. Stevens repeatedly reminds him that his original intention was to proceed cautiously and tentatively, waiting till repeal had had time to work its natural effect in breaking down the barrier between the two classes of churchmen.

Failure paves the way to Success.

But though the attempt miscarried for the time, it was not altogether without result. It cleared the way for the accomplishment of the scheme when the proper time came. For one thing it showed, that there would be no difficulty in securing a vacancy of the see for an English occupant. Bishop Abernethy Drummond, who held the see of Edinburgh, promptly agreed, on the primus's application, to resign in favour of this English candidate. It seemed to be understood that he would be equally ready to make way for another, and he did so, as soon as the diocese could agree upon a candidate! †

* "From the Bishop of Rochester's letter to Mr. Cleve (?), his lordship looks on the proposed union as an extraordinary project, to which he sees insuperable objections ; and from that I suppose the bench think it is not in their power to do the Scotch episcopal church much service. If you say the bishop argues weakly, it may be a question whether the weakness of the objections does not show the strength of them, and whether such would have been urged had it been thought expedient to sit still."—Mr. Stevens to Primus Skinner, December 19, 1793.

† Bishop Abernethy Drummond, no doubt, felt that he himself could do little to promote union. If Lord Kellie can be trusted, the

The Primus opposes Consecration of Bishops-elect.

In the matter of this election the primus was, at the worst, guilty of only an excess of inopportune zeal. In certain other episcopal appointments, in which he about this time took a leading part, he was less happy. He carried to excess the practice—hardly in any case excusable—of refusing to confirm the election of a bishop, when there was no canonical ground for refusal—no irregularity in the election, or unfitness in the elect. As has been seen (chap. v.), he thus vetoed the election of Mr. Gleig to Dunkeld, in the year 1785; he had done so again and again, the last time being in 1791. This treatment of one of the ablest and best known presbyters in the church, raised a prejudice against the primus, especially in the south; and the result was seen when he next attempted to veto the election of a bishop.

Promotion of Alexander Jolly.

For about eleven years there had been a strong desire, on the part of his friends and admirers, to have

church at least was decidedly of this opinion. "His lordship, I found, had been much displeased with the conduct of Bishop Abernethy, and said, if it had not been for his absurdity, everything would have gone on quietly, and the Scotch episcopal church would have increased in credit every day, and the English chapels would have died away of themselves."—Mr. Stevens to Primus Skinner, April, 1794.

There is no doubt great exaggeration here. For conciliation, Bishop Drummond was certainly ill qualified, being hot and fiery, especially as a pamphleteer; but no Scotch bishop could have done very much for actual union as yet. Too much was expected from the mere passage of the repeal act.

the learned and sainted Alexander Jolly raised to the episcopate as coadjutor bishop of Moray and Ross. The matter had been so much thought and talked of, that the saintly man himself had come, at last, to believe that it was a thing that ought to be done. In a letter to his friend, Bishop Watson * (October 12th, 1792), he gave frank utterance to the *volo episcopari.*

Primus Refuses his Consent.

The majority of the episcopal college were favourable to his appointment. The primus, however, had always opposed the appointment, and he refused his consent to it, when, in the year 1796, the majority of his colleagues agreed to confirm the election. On this occasion the primus had a much better cause than he had in the case of Dr. Gleig. The question at issue was one which really belonged to the episcopal college. It was not whether the election had been regular and good, but whether, in the circumstances, there ought to have been any election at all. Was there any need, at that time, for a coadjutor for the diocese of Moray and Ross? Ought the episcopal college to have assented, in such a case, to the continuance of the irregular and most faulty system of creating in this way a see for a bishop, or granting him a title? Had the episcopal college decided that there should be no coadjutor consecrated for Moray and Ross at that time, they would have acted quite within their rights. Their refusal would have been a very different thing from the refusal to consecrate a bishop-elect, whose

* See "Scottish Church Review," Vol. I., p. 178, *seq.*

election had been regular, and he himself canonically unobjectionable. The primus, however, could not persuade his colleagues to refuse a coadjutor to Moray and Ross, or consecration to Alexander Jolly. Consecration was the decision of the majority, and the decision of the majority was the decree of the college. It was a pity that the primus, as president of the college, did not yield gracefully to the majority, and carry out the decree of the college. He stood out, however, and so also did his colleagues.

Primus's Opposition Over-ruled.

The majority of the college adhered to their decision. They met at Dundee on the eve of St. John Baptist's Day (June 23rd, 1796), appointed Bishop Abernethy Drummond primus or president for the occasion, and next day consecrated Mr. Jolly, the officiating prelates being Bishops Abernethy Drummond, Strachan, and Macfarlane.

This Proceeding not Illegal.

The course taken by the college on this occasion, though regrettable, was quite lawful. The bishops had all bound themselves, by their signatures to the declaration prefixed to the first episcopal minute book (1743),* "not to consecrate any one without the concurrence of the majority of the bishops;" but they had not bound themselves not to consecrate without the

* The last bishop that signed the above declaration was the late Bishop Suther of Aberdeen. "T. G. Suther adheres."

concurrence of the primus. The primus was (and is) only *primus inter pares.*

Beneficial Effects.

The summary course taken by the college did more, perhaps, than anything else to put an end to the irregularities that had become so inveterate in connexion with episcopal appointments. This was the last case of the consecration of an unnecessary coadjutor, and the last serious attempt to veto an election. From this time forth, notwithstanding a strong hankering after the old system manifested by some of the ablest bishops, the choice of the clergy of a diocese has always been respected ; no election has been annulled or set aside.

Prejudicial Effects.

The minute of the Dundee meeting bears distinct witness to the state of confusion into which the church was thrown by this *quasi*-revolt of the episcopal college. The clerk of the college, Bishop Watson—a great friend both of the primus and of Mr. Jolly—did not appear at the meeting.* The only persons present apparently were the three consecrating bishops and the bishop-elect ; and the latter was appointed clerk of the meeting. The minute does not open in the usual way, with the date and *sederunt*, but with a somewhat bald though quite uncontroversial statement

* The following note is appended to the minute :—"The above being sent by post for insertion in the episcopal minute book, is accordingly inserted—JOHN. WATSON, clerk."

of the events that led up to the meeting. "Bishop Macfarlane," it is said, "having signified his wish to have a coadjutor, . . . the same was consented unto and Dundee appointed, &c." The only reference to the primus is, that in his "absence" another was appointed to preside. There is no minute of another episcopal synod till 1806, ten years afterwards. It may well be understood that there was little inclination on the part of the bishops to meet in council, and as little intercourse or communication between them on church affairs.

Effect on the Primus.

Primus Skinner no doubt felt keenly this flagrant case of opposition to his authority, but he bore it with the dignity which never forsook him. So far as appears he did not suffer it to betray him into a single unseemly word or act. His friends and relations probably felt more than he did, and they could (and did) express themselves with more freedom. His father, and his uncle (James) from Edinburgh, paid him a visit soon after the occurrence of the "untoward event." The former, writing to the latter (October 20, 1796), referred to the visit, and expressed his regret at "the extraneous vexation which our landlord (the primus) was lying under." "I cannot express," he added, "how much I feel with him and for him under the present burden of insult thrown upon him, as, I hope I may say without vanity, none of his acquaintances need be ashamed of him; sure I am none of his connexions will. The worst is, this unchristian

farce of spite and duplicity is not yet ended; for he has lately had a fresh letter from the Pope beside you, with a bullying threat of censure from the Jolly Club, unless he will give his official *approbation* of all the violent steps they have taken in this divisive business. So that you need not be surprised, however much displeased, if you hear of such a thing being put in execution, which I have not the least doubt but that furious firebrand will attempt to drive the rest unto; as our friend neither can of himself, nor would I (both as a father and as a presbyter, regarding the dignity of *his* bishop) wish him to yield to such a humiliating and unreasonable demand." "The sufferer himself," continued Mr. Skinner, "has, in my opinion, been rather too passive under the treatment he has met with, and whether from prudence or timidity, has carried himself calmer than I would or could have done at his time of life. Perhaps he has acted best. Let events decide." *

No doubt "the sufferer" "acted for the best" in taking the matter as quietly as possible. Whether right or wrong, he was in the minority. Doubtless he was also conscious that, whatever might have been permissible in the past, the time for such summary action as he had taken in episcopal elections was now past. Probably, after a few months, all parties would have been glad to forget the incident. The Edinburgh "Pope" (Abernethy Drummond), having gained his point, was not such "a furious firebrand" as to push the matter to extremes. The most likely result was

* Unpublished letter of Mr. Skinner, Linshart, in possession of William Skinner, Esq., Town Clerk, Edinburgh.

not the continuance of summary action on the part of the college, but for the time the total cessation of all action.

NOTE TO CHAPTER XI.

HUTCHINSONIANISM.

Dr. Grub, in his excellent history (Vol. IV., 113) says, in reference to the failure of Mr. Boucher's candidature, "It was probably fortunate, for the cause of episcopacy in Scotland, that Boucher was not raised to the see of Edinburgh," and assigns, as a reason, that the consequence might have been that Hutchinsonianism would have become as prevalent in the church in the south as in the north, "and the teaching of a body so small in number as the Scottish clergy, might have been seriously and permanently affected." There might have been some risk of such a result, had an appointment of the sort been made twenty or thirty years previously. But by this time the Hutchinsonian tide had turned—the proselytising power of the theory was exhausted. It could not abide the philological light which issued from the recently discovered Sanscrit. The theory, in fact, never appears to have made any way even with the native clergy of the Edinburgh diocese. Mr. Gleig of Stirling was one of its most powerful and uncompromising opponents.

CHAPTER XII.

1796-1804.

Lull in Church affairs—Primus finds new outlets for his energy—Campbell's Lectures—Primus's Literary Labours—Account of his meeting with Burns—Lent Lectures—Catechisms—Primitive truth and order—Principal Campbell's attack on validity of Scotch Bishops' Orders—Norman Sievwright's previous attack—Campbell on the general subject of Episcopacy—Success of "Primitive Truth, &c."—Dr. Mitchell's reply to it—Episcopacy identified with Absolutism—The Scotch Bishops "as Apostles"—Skinner's reply to Dr. Mitchell—Notes.

FOR the last four years of the last century, and the first four of the present, church progress seemed to be at a standstill. Recent premature or ill-considered measures and movements had, by their result, disappointed all the prominent actors, and indisposed them, not only for the initiation of measures, but even for mutual consultation and co-operation. They drew back, each within his own sphere, and the union, as Bishop Horsley had suggested, was left "to do itself." And probably it was best done in this way. The process may have been slower, but it was surer. The seeds of union had been sown, and they went on germinating in silence and quiet. The church appeared all still and inactive, but the forces that made for union were at work within it. Obstacles to com-

pliance with government were gradually lessening and disappearing; irreconcilable Jacobites were dying out; strong ecclesiastical prejudices were softening; and men's minds were insensibly taking "the form and pressure" of the age, and adapting themselves to changed circumstances.

Primus finds outlets for his energy.

In these circumstances, the cause of union was best served by private persuasion of word and letter, and by temperate advocacy through the press. These means, and especially that of the press, were all diligently used by Primus Skinner. Circumstances occurred which enabled him to combine, with effect, church defence and the advocacy of union.

Publication of Campbell's Lectures.

Principal George Campbell, of Marischal College, Aberdeen, died in 1795; his ecclesiastical lectures were published in 1801, and the work fell like a bombshell amongst the northern episcopalians. It was found that the principal cast scorn on the claims and pretensions of the little church, and maintained that, from the prevalence of the college system and the abeyance of diocesan episcopacy after the revolution, the Scotch bishops were no bishops at all, but presbyters at best, and the Scotch episcopalians were only Scotch presbyterians. This was a staggering blow from "the dead hand." It fluttered the victims for a brief space, but they soon rallied to the defence. Answers quickly appeared in the chief English

periodicals, the ablest being that by Mr. Gleig in the "Anti-Jacobin." Primus Skinner took up the question in a charge, and in some other fugitive productions; but eventually he put forth on the subject a defensive work of upwards of 500 pages.

The Primus in his Literary capacity.

Before noticing this, his chief work, it is proper to give some account of the publications which the primus had previously issued. They were all occasional works, or works called forth in the course of duty by some object of special interest. They embraced sermons, charges, briefs or pastoral letters, lent lectures, catechisms, &c. Most of these were seasonable and serviceable productions, and were well appreciated by the limited public to which they were addressed. They had no pretensions to finish. The primus wrote in haste, in the brief intervals of active work, much as one imagines the late Canon Kingsley to have written, viz., rushing to his desk, booted and spurred from the hunting field. Any good thoughts that came from Primus Skinner fell "as sparks from a working engine." He wrote simply and forcibly in his private letters.

His Meeting with Burns.

His natural style may be seen in the account given to his father of his interesting meeting with the poet Burns, in Aberdeen, in printer Chalmers' office,* when the three friends—poet, printer, and prelate—adjourned

* Mr. Chalmers' office was then in Castle Street.

to a neighbouring tavern where they discussed the national poetry over the national liquor:—"Calling at the printing office the other day," writes the bishop, "whom should I meet on the stair but the famous Burns, the Ayrshire bard! And on Mr. Chalmers telling him that I was the son of 'Tullochgorum,' there was no help but I must step into the inn hard by and drink a glass with him and the printer. Our time was short, as he was just setting off for the South, and his companion hurrying him, but we had fifty 'Auld Sangs' through hand, and spent an hour or so most agreeably. 'Did not your father write The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn?' 'Yes.' 'Oh, an' I had the loon that did it!' said he, in a rapture of praise, 'but tell him how I love and esteem and venerate his truly Scottish muse.' . . . He had been at Gordon Castle, and came by Peterhead. 'Then,' said I, 'you were within four Scots miles of Tullochgorum's dwelling.' Had you seen the look he gave and the expression of vexation; had he been your own son you could not have wished a better proof of affection. 'Well,' said he at parting, and shaking me by the hand as if he had been really my brother, 'I am happy in having seen you, and thereby conveying my long harboured sentiments of regard for your worthy sire; assure him of it in the heartiest manner, and that never did a devotee of the Virgin Mary go to Loretto with more fervour than I would have approached his dwelling, and worshipped at his shrine.'"

The simple and lively style of this extract differed from the primus's usual style for the press, as much as the style of Johnson's letters from the Hebrides

differed from that of his printed tour. Though always dignified and impressive, the primus's style in his printed works was somewat heavy and formal, deficient in concentration and lucid order—defects which are readily overlooked in a spoken address, but which detract seriously from the value of a printed book.

Lent Lectures.

The only work of any size which he published before 1803 was a series of lent lectures, which appeared in 1786.* The lectures were six in number—the first introductory, and the remaining five containing a summary account of Scripture history, and of the doctrines and ordinances of the church. In an appendix the contents of the five latter lectures were "digested in the form of question and answer . . . to serve as a Catechism for those of riper years." No doubt the bishop himself made use of this catechism in instructing his members of "riper years." His father and other clergymen of that and more recent times catechized, at certain seasons, the grown-up members of their congregations, fixing the age to which attendance should be continued at 25. This age, they used humorously to say, some of the young people were not forward to admit that they had passed, and so they continued to attend the class much longer.

Catechisms.

This work was the forerunner and foundation of the series of catechisms, which, in conformity with the

* "A Course of Lectures, delivered on the six Sundays in Lent, to a Congregation of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, &c."—Aberdeen, 1786.

resolution of the episcopal synod (of Stonehaven, Sept. 20, 1792), the primus put forth for the use of the younger members of the church. The first of these appeared in the year 1796, and it was followed up, after a time, by another and considerably larger one for more advanced pupils. These two catechisms continued in use in the diocese of Aberdeen till about the middle of the present century, and they were generally known as "the Little Bishop's" and "the Muckle Bishop's" catechisms.

Primitive Truth and Order.

The work which the primus published in 1803 in answer to Principal Campbell's attack, was one of a very different order from these early publications. It was entitled "Primitive Truth and Order vindicated from Modern Misrepresentation, &c."

In point of learning, ability, and tone, this work was very creditable, but for general efficiency as a controversial weapon, it was too lengthy and diffuse in style. It embraced three heads, with "a concluding address to the episcopalians of Scotland," as follows:—

I. Primitive truth; or, the original and genuine principles of the Christian faith.

II. A general defence of episcopacy.

III. A particular defence of the episcopacy of Scotland.

The object of the concluding address was to exhort the two bodies of Scotch episcopalians to union.

Work covers too much Ground.

But the primus evidently endeavoured to cover too much ground. The first head and the concluding address would have been better omitted or greatly abridged. Nos. II. and III., if they had been compressed in style, would have made a treatise on episcopacy not only of passing but of permanent value. As it was, however, the book, in spite of drawbacks, was read and appreciated by many churchmen on both sides of the Tweed. Nay, its merits appear to have been freely acknowledged by another Presbyterian principal and professor of divinity. The primus' son and the annalist of his administration says, he "can assert on authority, which he holds to be unquestionable, the authority of a worthy historian [Dr. Cook] of the Established Church of Scotland, that a principal and professor of theology in a Scotch university [Dr. Hill] not many miles from the river Tay [St. Andrews], 'having read Primitive Truth and Order, &c., with great care, pronounced it to be the best defence of episcopacy in the English language, and more than a sufficient refutation of Dr. Campbell.'" *

Principal Campbell's Views.

It is very probable that many ministers of the established church in those days by no means accepted Dr. Campbell's teaching in regard either to the church or to the ministry. His views were, in fact, the views of Lord Chancellor King—the views of the congrega-

* "Annals of Scottish Episcopacy," p. 321.

tionalists or independents. The Christian church was, in this view, by no means a divine organisation, but a merely human and voluntary association, "like a knot of artists or philosophers," suggested by expediency and convenience. Each separate congregation was independent of all the rest. The ministers were merely the servants appointed by the congregations, having no official character but what they derived from the congregational appointment, and only so long as they held the same. A man ceased to be a minister as soon as he ceased to hold a particular charge, just "as a man ceases to be a husband the moment he ceases to have a wife, and is no longer a shepherd than he has the care of sheep."

The Principal "unfrocks" the Scotch Bishops.

Applying this theory to the case of the Scotch bishops, who were consecrated after the revolution but had no particular diocese or sphere of labour assigned to them, the principal triumphantly concluded that they were no bishops at all—mere "nominal bishops." To their "first ordination" as presbyters, "their farcical consecration by Bishop Ross [Rose] and others, when they were solemnly made the depositories of no deposit, commanded to be diligent in doing no work, vigilant in the oversight of no flock, assiduous in teaching and governing no people, and presiding in no church, added nothing at all." * To a calm, unbiassed reasoner, this passage seems merely a smart attempt at ridicule.

* Principal Campbell's "Lectures," p. 354. "Primitive Truth and Order," p. 370.

College Bishops had general Charge.

No doubt those early consecrations were irregular, but, even on the principal's own theory that actual charge of a flock alone constituted office, the prelates thus consecrated were not without official character. They all had a charge committed to them, that of the whole episcopal body in Scotland—*singuli in solidum.* They were appointed to take part in "governing" the whole, and also in "teaching" and ministering to the whole, or to any part, as might be found necessary, like the ministers of a collegiate charge. Indeed, though on the church-and-state theory it was believed that no bishop could then be *legally* appointed to any particular diocese, yet they had in general a particular field of duty—a *portio gregis*—assigned to each.

Distinction between Orders and Jurisdiction.

Thus even on his own theory the principal's argument was not conclusive. On the ordinary "church" theory—the theory of all episcopalians, and apparently of most old school presbyterians also—the argument was altogether pointless and futile. A clear distinction had always been taken between orders and jurisdiction, between, as Hooker puts it, "the nature of the office and the exercise thereof," between "the making of a minister and the placing of him," between conferring the office on a qualified man, and assigning to him a particular field for its exercise.

There are, as the primus and the other critics showed, not a few cases in civil life where, for a time,

the office and an appointment for the exercise of the office are disjoined, while all the while the official character and status of the officer are fully recognised: a naval captain, for instance, may be years without a ship. Whatever, therefore, might be thought of the principal's general attack on episcopacy, the particular attack on Scotch episcopacy was not argumentatively formidable.

Norman Sievwright's Attack.

Dr. Campbell was probably encouraged to make this attack by a similar and more formidable attack made on the same body, at an earlier period in the century, by the Rev. Norman Sievwright, the qualified episcopal minister of Brechin. Sievwright denied the episcopacy of the Scotch bishops—not on any narrow theory of the ministerial office, but on the authority of the canons of their own church, and the decision of their own episcopal synod. At the period of internecine war between the collegers and the usagers, some bishops, who helped to continue the succession, were consecrated in direct contravention of the canons, and their consecration was pronounced at the time "null and void" by the episcopal college. This was a much more serious charge than the principal's. These consecrations—forbidden by law, and condemned by the living authority—were, in the highest degree, irregular. Yet the objection founded on them never carried weight. Men of sense easily distinguished between the irregular and the invalid. The most irregular of the consecrations were still valid consecrations. They made real

bishops, though not bishops that had any authority or jurisdiction in the Scottish church, till the episcopal college recognised and legalised their consecration.

The General Subject of Episcopacy.

The subject of episcopacy in general was not so personal to the Scotch bishops and their church. The primus, however, discussed it at full length and with a very creditable display of learning, ability, and temper. He had not the vigorous telling style of the principal, but he reasoned more calmly and temperately. Principal Campbell followed too closely the lead of Lord King, not only in theory, but also in arguments and authorities. There was little that was new in his work. Lord King had been answered by Sclater, in his "Draught of the Primitive Church;" and if the chancellor was not "converted," as he was said to be, by that work, he was at least convinced that there was another side to the question.

Success of the Work.

The work accomplished all that it aimed at. It reassured the native churchmen, and helped to bring about a re-union with their separated brethren. On the people of Scotland, generally, it produced no effect, and no possible presentation of the claims of episcopacy could have done so at that time.

Controversy Continued.

Principal Campbell's theory of the origin of the Christian ministry was defended by some, and at least not openly repudiated by any of his Presbyterian

brethren. It was hailed with acclamation by the independents.

Dr. Mitchell of Kemnay.

The Rev. Dr. Mitchell, parish minister of Kemnay, published, in 1809, a work, in which he replied to Primus Skinner and all the other critics of Principal Campbell's lectures.*

The doctor was a man of ability, and had a true vein of humour and a racy style ; but his manner was altogether too "contemptuous" and "mocking" for the subject. Ridicule was almost the only weapon he wielded.

Episcopacy Absolutism.

In this controversy it seemed to be taken for granted on the one side, and not denied on the other, that episcopal rule is necessarily absolute. "It seems indeed," writes Dr. Mitchell ('Presbyterian Letters,' p. 6), "to be one of that church's theological axioms, that no form of government, civil or ecclesiastical, is *of God*, but absolute monarchy alone ; an axiom on which she has always most religiously formed her own conduct." Now at that very time there was in existence in America, a regular constitutional episcopacy, of which another Principal Campbell of Aberdeen has said, that its "admirable constitution combines the advantages of Presbytery and Episcopacy."† No

* "Presbyterian Letters, addressed to Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen on his Vindication of Primitive Truth and Order." London, 1809.

† "The Theory of the Ruling Eldership ; or the Position of the Lay Eldership in the Reformed Churches Examined." By Peter Colin Campbell, D.D., Principal of the University of Aberdeen.—Blackwoods, London and Edinburgh, 1866. See p. 67, also p. 81.

reader of the Campbell controversy could have supposed that such a form of episcopacy then existed or could exist. Little was done, or probably could at that time be expected to be done, to dispel the old Scotch prejudices against episcopacy, both as a doctrine and as an institution. It is only quite recently that any serious attempts have been made to accomplish this end. (See Note A.)

"*High-sounding Titles.*"

Primus Skinner retorted with good humour on the principal, when the latter took up the old strain of railing at "proud prelates" and "proud prancing prelates." Speaking of the "high-sounding titles" which were at one time given to ecclesiastics, the principal had said, "the priestly pride of some prelatical preachers" instigated them to revive such customs ("Lectures," I., 313). The primus retorted, with mimetic alliteration, that "the pride of presbytery was more predominant in these prelections than could be expected in a professor." ("Primitive Truth," &c., p. 154.)

The College Bishops "as Apostles."

Dr. Mitchell carried his ridicule a step farther than the principal. It is thus that he accounts for the poor success of the Scotch college bishops as apostles for Scotland:—"They had not the power of working miracles. As to the gift of tongues, they had no need for it, unless it had been to enable them to read the Fathers without the use of Lexicons, and what Presbyterian clergymen need, *faithful translations*, but

their mission did not send them, I may say, from the *fireside*. And you know, they depended chiefly for success on James VII. and James VIII.; whereas the first apostles looked to Heaven, instead of to France." ("Presbyterian Letters," p. 348.)

Reply to Dr. Mitchell.

In 1811 a pamphlet, by "a Whig of the old Stamp," appeared in answer to the "Presbyterian Letters."* This work was, no doubt, by Primus Skinner, and it furnished such an answer as learning and argument could furnish to such an attack.

The controversy was not unfitly wound up by the publication, in 1826,† of a work against both presbytery and episcopacy by an independent, who rested the weight of his argument mainly on the authority of Principal Campbell, who, he says, had "witnessed so powerfully and uniformly concerning the primitive antiquity and divine original of the independent form of church government" (p. 8).

* The writer found, amongst the collection of the letters received by the primus in 1811, an abusive anonymous one, in which the writer says, "the Printer told me you are the author."

† "A Comparative View of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Independent Forms of Church Government, &c." Aberdeen: A. Russell, 1826.

NOTE A.

EPISCOPACY AND RE-UNION.

For a quarter of a century Bishop Wordsworth of St. Andrews has laboured with rare learning and persuasive power to recommend episcopacy to the Scottish people. The result has not been encouraging. Probably many changes will happen in the country before the subject has a chance of securing a patient consideration from the mass of the people.

A controversy which may be said to turn upon the question—what is the proper mode of presenting episcopacy to the people of Scotland was carried on in the columns of the "Scottish Guardian," in the end of last and the beginning of the present year (Nov. 19, 1886—Jan. 28, 1887). The controversy originated in the review of an able and discriminating sermon, preached by Professor Salmon of Dublin, at the consecration of the present Bishop of Edinburgh, and it was carried on by a number of the ablest clergymen in the church, who creditably represented the three great parties which compose the Anglican Church. Dr. Salmon drew attention to the words prefixed to the English ordinal —words, the pointedness of which has probably struck every earnest advocate of church union—"It is evident unto all men diligently reading the holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time* there have been these three orders of Ministers in Christ's Church —Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." Here the church states a fact, and proceeds to act upon it. Whatever the church means or implies it draws no other inference than this practical one. Dr. Salmon does the same. He does not "feel himself called upon to go beyond" the church. He leaves it to each churchman to put his own interpretation on the church's words, and to hold his own views as to the origin and the necessity of episcopacy. And it appears from the correspondence that there are in the church clergymen who all profess to prize and reverence episcopacy, and who yet hold very different views as to its origin. There are amongst them at least three pretty distinct views, representing the three English church parties.

Parties and schools of thought seem to be inevitable. They are in human nature, and experience seems to prove more and more that it is "not good for" a party "to be alone" in a church. It soon comes to suffer from the want of a wholesome activity, and an adequate and stirring representation of all the phases of many-sided divine truth; and the great problem for the advocates of church union is how, by means of "open questions" or the permission of "alternative explanations" of difficult questions, to secure that the inevitable parties shall dwell together in unity?

It seems to be now generally admitted that in Scotland there has always been on all hands too little tolerance for diverging views. A correspondence lately appeared in the "Scotsman" (Feb., 1886), in which an "old" and a "young Parish Minister" took part, and gave emphatic

* Or as Dr. Salmon would probably put it—"From the time when the Church came out of the tunnel into which it entered immediately after Apostolic times."

expression to their belief that even re-union among presbyterians would be dearly bought by the abandonment of the more liberal and tolerant views and practices which had been introduced through the influence of Dr. Robert Lee (an Englishman by the way), and a return to "narrow views and old-fashioned prejudices."

NOTE B.

PRINCIPAL GEORGE CAMPBELL.

The northern churchmen felt all the more keenly the attack of Principal Campbell, as he had volunteered to speak a good word for them, three years before his death, when presumably he was preparing these lectures for the press. They seemed to think him wanting in straightforwardness and consistency, but in this view they were doubtless mistaken. The principal seems to have always stood up boldly for toleration to all churches and parties, however much he might disapprove of their opinions. He preached a synod sermon (April 9, 1771), in which he hit out right and left at all who, either by excess or defect, differed greatly in opinion from himself. In giving the genealogy of superstition and fanaticism, or "enthusiasm" as it was generally called in those days, he says, "Ignorance is the mother of both, by different fathers. The second she had by presumption, the first by fear. Hence that wonderful mixture of contrariety and resemblance in the character of her children."* He spoke, his biographer says, "in such strong terms as raised up a number of adversaries against him." No doubt, from the terms used, some of these "adversaries" were "enthusiasts," belonging to a party in his own church. The children of "superstition," again, were chiefly, it seems, the Roman catholics. Yet, eight years afterwards, when a great popular clamour was raised against a proposed bill for removing the disabilities of the Roman catholics, the principal published a powerful address to the people of Scotland in favour of the bill. In this address he showed that, in the matter of toleration, he was before his age. "Let popery," he said, "be as bad as ye will; call it Beelzebub if you please. It is not by Beelzebub that I am for casting out Beelzebub, but by the Spirit of God. . . . In the most unlovely spirit of popery, and with the unhallowed arms of popery, we would fight against popery."

It was also, doubtless, to the "enthusiasts" of the time that the principal chiefly referred when, on a different occasion, he said that he

* Lectures," i., p. xxvi.

had often heard preachers, "and very popular preachers too," who "dragged their whole system" of divinity into every discourse, and who, though they had many texts, had in fact only one sermon.

It was said by his critics that the principal had, by merely preparing his lectures for the press, like Bolingbroke, loaded a blunderbuss and left it to an executor to draw the trigger. The real reason, however, why he did not publish his lectures during his lifetime was, doubtless, that he could not do so while he continued to hold the chair of divinity, which he did till a short time before his death. It may be safely assumed, however, that, had he lived to see his lectures through the press, he would have considerably modified some of his statements, and also probably taken more pains to verify his quotations, which, the critics maintained, were mostly taken second-hand from Lord King, errors of the press included. When he went forth to do battle with the formidable "stripling," David Hume, the principal took great and creditable pains to make sure of his ground. He had the manuscript of his answer submitted to Hume by Dr. Blair, and he "expunged or softened every expression that either was severe or was only supposed to be offensive; he removed every objection that had been made to his arguments, &c. It was the "contemptuous" and "mocking" style, in which he essayed to "unfrock" the Scotch bishops, that chiefly offended them. These offensive expressions might all have been "expunged or softened," without any detriment to the force of his argument.

PRINCIPAL CUNNINGHAM, ST. ANDREWS.

Another learned principal has lately published what is apparently a yet more decided denial than Dr. Campbell's of the divine origin of the Christian ministry. Dr. Cunningham in his Croal lectures (1886) explains the origin of the church on the principle of evolution, the various stages of development being "Individualism, Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, Episcopalianism, Papalism." The church and the ministry are human expedients for carrying out the divine purpose in the edification of men, and may take any form which may seem most effectual.

Apparently the majority of Principal Cunningham's clerical brethren agree with him in this view, but certainly not the whole, as may be seen from the lectures of Dr. Sprott of North Berwick. There is, however, nothing "mocking" or "contemptuous" in Principal Cunningham's arguments.

CHAPTER XIII.

1804 *(Continued).*

His two sons, John and William—John, *versus* the British Critic and the Anti-Jacobin Review—"The Critic's" estimate of Primus as writer—William Skinner sent to Oxford by William Stevens' Society—The Beraeans—A Good Beraean—William Skinner ordained by Bishop Horsley—The Primus's three schemes—Friendly Society—Reconciliation—Re-union—Episcopal Fund—Dr. Sandford, Edinburgh—Anecdotes illustrating the inconveniences of factitious distinctions between qualified and unqualified clergymen—Wise and witty sayings of the Beraeans—Mr. Bowdler—James Allan Park—William Stevens—Bishop Horsley—Archdeacon Daubeny.

PRIMUS Skinner, though he had lately met with unpleasant checks, disappointments, and annoyances, both within the church and without, had yet, at this stage of his career, abundant cause to "thank God and take courage." The great twin tasks of reconciliation with the state, and re-union with the separated congregations, were steadily, though slowly, progressing towards completion. He himself was still, in fact, as well as in name, the head of the church—commanding general respect and confidence. Then, in his numerous friends on both sides of the Tweed, and in his now grown-up family, he found great comfort and encouragement under trial. His two sons, John and William, were like-minded with himself, and both, in due time, entered the ministry of the church.

John Skinner, Junior.

John was ordained in 1770, and, after serving for a time at Montrose and then at Banff, was appointed, towards the end of the century, to the important charge of Forfar, which he continued to hold till his death. William finished his course at Marischal College, Aberdeen, 1797, and afterwards proceeded to Wadham College, Oxford. Of the two sons, John was the abler and more energetic, and William the more prudent and cautious. John certainly inherited not a little of his father's talent and energy. At this stage of his ministry he took great interest in his father's measures, and did what he could to promote them. At times, as was natural, he showed more zeal than discretion.

"*British Critic*" *and* "*Anti-Jacobin Review.*"

At the beginning of the present century, the two English high church periodicals, the "British Critic" and the "Anti-Jacobin Review," though on the whole very friendly to the primus and his English friends, were nevertheless by no means undiscriminating in their support. Both were stoutly opposed to Hutchinsonianism, and would not admit into their columns anything that savoured of that now discredited theory. Then to their credit, neither of them seems to have, as a rule, permitted favour, either for persons, parties, or principles, to interfere with the just estimate of the literary character of a work. The correspondence of the primus's London friends shows that the editors were inflexible on these points, and Mr. John Skinner

had practical experience of the fact. He sought admission in the "Anti-Jacobin" for an answer to that Review's notice of his father's Laurencekirk convocation sermon. He failed in this attempt, and then he published his answer in the appendix to a fast sermon, entitling it "Some Strictures on the Review of Bishop Skinner's Convocation Sermon, given in the 'Anti-Jacobin' and 'British Critic' for February last."

"*British Critic's*" *Literary Estimate.*

The "British Critic," in its notice of Mr. Skinner's sermon, expressed "surprise" at finding itself the subject of "Strictures," and proceeded to prove, by extracts from its notices of the primus's works, that the "Critic" had always treated him "with justice and candour." "On one occasion" (VII., 554), said the "Critic," "we said, that 'in point of composition, two sermons then published by him, were such as would do credit to any bishop in any age or country; and that the style of them, though less laboured and less polished than that of many contemporary sermons, had much of that dignified plainness which is well suited to discourses from the pulpit.' In the review objected to, we have said of Bishop Skinner, that 'in various erudition and in acuteness to detect the sophistry of error, he, as well as some of the other ministers of his church, yielded not to the clergy of any church whatever;' and what more could we have said of a Horsley, a Hurd, or a Warburton? In a subsequent review (March, 1805), we have said, 'that Bishop Skinner has fairly refuted Dr. Campbell's reasoning,

. . . and that he is a man whom any church in Christendom may be proud to own.' This is an extent of praise which we are persuaded the most learned English dignitary would consider quite adequate to his merits. . . . But we have likewise said that 'the Bishop's style is confused, not always intelligible, often inaccurate, and occasionally even ungrammatical, and that he is certainly not a fine writer.' We have indeed said all this, and should have said it of Bishop Warburton and Bishop Wilson, had the writings of these prelates come under our review."*

William Skinner (afterwards Bishop).

The primus's second son, William, was much younger than John. When William finished his course at Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1797, his father wished, if possible, to send him to an English university, but he could hardly afford to do so without the help of a scholarship.

William Stevens' Scheme.

He had heard that there was a possibility of his obtaining such help from "the Elland Society." Naturally on such a subject he consulted Mr. William Stevens, who did what he could to procure the scholarship, but in vain. Stevens was not a man, however,

* Without doubt the "Critic" did, on the whole, do full literary justice to the primus. His son John, who now reclaimed against the critics, afterwards admitted ("Annals," p. 319) that both the "British Critic" and the "Anti-Jacobin Review" "did ample justice to the merits" of his father's chief work, "Primitive Truth and Order."

to be easily baffled in a matter of this sort. Where he could not find a way, he made a way. In this case he made a society.

The Beraeans.

He wrote to the primus (Dec. 12, 1797)—"I should have been sorry you had failed in your application to the *Elland Society* had I not providentially fallen in with another, which, I think, may answer your purpose fully as well. It is at present in its infancy, and calls itself the Beraean Society, in allusion, I suppose, to the Beraeans of old, *who searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so*, it being the work of the Society to promote such laudable pursuits. Being acquainted with some of the members, they have made me their Treasurer, and I am authorised to inform you that, from the representations given of your son, the Society would, in short, allow him a Scholarship of £100 per annum." In this pleasant way did that excellent "laughing Christian philosopher," as Mr. Bowdler called him, get over difficulties when he found a friend in need. He and some of his intimate and like-minded friends to whom he applied for help in every good work constituted the society. Under the society's auspices, William Skinner entered Wadham College, Oxford, early in 1798. The warden of that college was a friend of Dr. Gaskin's, and everything that the Beraeans could do was done to make the young student's course easy and safe. It seems from their letters to the primus, especially Mr. Bowdler's, that there was, at that time, great risk of a

young man's morals in sending him to Oxford. It was "like casting a Moses into the mud." There was little risk of young Skinner. But to encourage him in well doing, the authorities of his college held out to him the prospect of obtaining a Hebrew exhibition, if his conduct was found satisfactory. His conduct was exemplary, and the exhibition became his.

A Good Beraean.

On his way to Oxford, Mr. Stevens, with the view of making him a good Beraean [and Hutchinsonian], presented young Skinner with "Mr. Parkhurst's two lexicons," assuring him that "with those two books and his Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament, well used, he might set up trade whenever called upon."—(Letter to primus, March 15, 1798.) It was not without reason that Mr Stevens gave his "Society" the title of "Beraeans," for they certainly did "search the Scriptures," and in the original languages too. It was the great merit of the Hutchinsonian school. Now, however, it was too late in the day to make a good Hutchinsonian of William Skinner; but the Beraeans did better, they made him a good scholar and got him an Oxford degree. They persisted in looking upon him as their "ward" as long as he continued at Oxford, and so, when, in 1802, he fell dangerously ill and his father went to Oxford to attend upon him, Mr. Stevens enclosed a £50 note for the primus's expenses in a letter which "was not to be opened till arrived in the latitude of Ludgate Hill." The regular "Scholarship" was always sure, and Mr. Stevens took

steps to insure its continuance, though, as he expressed it, he "should drop" before it ceased to be needed. But additional help was always pressed upon the "Ward" when occasion called for additional outlay. The Beraeans, as their letters show, were all glad to see him at their houses and to encourage him in every way. Mr. Stevens, as became a "laughing philosopher," seasoned his serious advices with good humoured banter, complimenting his protégé, for instance, for not forgetting "his mother tongue," and warning him not to think of an English see, as it was a Scottish bishopric that he was intended for!

William Skinner Ordained.

At length in the spring of 1802, after delays caused partly by illness and partly by the necessity of attending the lectures of the professor of theology, which the "Wadhamist," preferring to read for orders "with his brother," tried to shirk, the Beraeans saw the complete accomplishment of their generous purpose. William Skinner was ordained deacon by Bishop Horsley, who was still at Rochester, and who had expressed to Mr. Bowdler his readiness to make any arrangement for the ordination which might be convenient for the convalescent candidate.

The primus and Mr. Stevens were both present at the ordination, and Mr. Stevens looked upon the "Wadhamist's" illness as "a fortunate circumstance in its consequences, as," said he (February 16th, 1802), "it will give me the opportunity of shaking hands with you [Primus Skinner] once more, and enjoying your company, a pleasure I never again expected."

William Skinner returned to Scotland with his father, in good health, became his father's assistant in the charge of St. Andrew's, and eventually his successor as pastor, as bishop, and as primus—*Secutus est patrem sed non passibus æquis.*

The Primus's Three Schemes.

The English friends and correspondents of the primus were ever as ready to help him in church matters as in family affairs. Three great schemes or objects had occupied the primus's mind for ten years—the establishment of the friendly society, full and final reconciliation with the state, and re-union with the separated congregations.

Episcopal Fund.

To this was added a fourth object, in which the primus and all the clergy had a great interest, but which was originated and carried out by the laity rather than by the clergy. This was the episcopal fund, which aimed at providing a small professional income for the bishops, and an additional allowance to the most necessitous of the clergy.

The letters show that the English brethren took the liveliest interest in all these objects, and helped them forward in every way, by pen and purse and influence.

The Friendly Society.

To begin with, the friendly society or widows' fund —Mr. Stevens seems to have constituted himself Eng-

lish treasurer and collector for it, and as long as he lived he sent a large sum to its funds every year. The first year he himself subscribed £20, and in all he sent upwards of £63. In subsequent years he always subscribed £10 10s., and he secured a good many subscribers of £5 5s. He scarcely ever sent less than £30; and the contribution was always accompanied with a hearty blessing—"We wish you good luck, in the name of the Lord!" When, towards the close of his life, the episcopal fund was originated, he was "the first English subscriber of £100" to its funds. He and his friends formed a committee to collect funds, and Mr. James Allan Park was the chairman. By this time, Mr. Stevens himself was becoming unfit for much business. But if his "man William," as he called himself, was become "good for nothing," in other matters he was yet able and willing to *give*.

In the two closely connected measures of compliance with state requirements and re-union with the separated brethren, the English friends helped the primus both directly and indirectly. At first, as has been seen, they gave him good advice, viz., to move slowly and cautiously, waiting the slow growth of opinion, and the natural development of events, and latterly, they helped on the movement by advice and influence.

Dr. Sandford, Edinburgh.

Several of them, Messrs. Bowdler, Van Mildert, and Dr. Gaskin, got into correspondence with Dr. Sandford, one of the Edinburgh English clergymen, who had been for several years deliberating as to the

duty of uniting with the native church, and their arguments had no small influence in removing his doubts and difficulties. Towards the end of 1804, his mind seemed made up on the subject.

Mr. Stevens wrote the primus (June 5th, 1804)—"I saw Mr. Van Mildert the other day, and was indulged with a view of the correspondence between him and Mr. Sandford, which I had heard of, but had never seen before. Mr. Sandford, in his last letter, written in May, mentions having read your book, and being much struck with it, as likewise with some passages in the last part of the review of it, in the 'Anti-Jacobin.' He also speaks of having turned to Jones on the church, and others on the same subject. He seems open to conviction, and I think there is great reason to hope that you and he will be of one mind. He expresses a wish of your communicating your thoughts to one another by letter, and I should apprehend you would be able to resolve the difficulties that still perplex him; for they do not appear to be of any serious nature."

Anecdotes Illustrative of Inconveniences of Disunion.

By the end of 1804, Dr. Sandford's mind was about made up, and Dr. Gaskin, writing to the primus (December 6th, 1804), refers to the fact, and, in connexion with it, tells two "anecdotes" which show what practical inconveniences resulted, in both ends of the Island, from the factitious distinction between one episcopal clergyman and another.

English Clergyman refuses to take Dr. Sandford's duty.

"I rejoice to find that Dr. Sandford is still endeavouring to accomplish the desired union. I have had this information from himself as well as from you, and what has recently occurred I trust will expedite it. I will tell you an anecdote—A young clergyman, a student of Christ's Church, now in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, was lately applied to by Dr. Sandford to officiate in his chapel. The clergyman, who is a good scholar, a good divine, and a conscientious man, had lately been reading your 'Primitive Truth and Order Vindicated,' to which I had recommended his attention, and he respectfully declined to comply with the request, for the correctest ecclesiastical reasons. Such a circumstance will do no harm to the progress of union, nor to Dr. Sandford."

Scotch Clergyman "in a Lay Habit."

"You shall have another anecdote—I lately preached at Woolwich, and, when accompanying my friend the rector into the vestry room, I was accosted by a gentleman *in a lay habit*, who, I afterwards found to be your friend, Mr. Andrew, who told me that he was settled in that parish as the master of a boarding-school. 'Sir,' said I, 'are not you a clergyman?' 'Yes,' he answered, 'but not in England, according to law.' 'Surely,' I answered, 'you are *per Christi legem*, and I am sorry to perceive that you have renounced the appearance of an ecclesiastic.'"

Mr. Andrew was clergyman at Monymusk two or three years before this period. He was a man of ability and scholarship, and eventually rose to be principal of Addiscombe college. But "by law" he was no clergyman south of the Tweed, and so he donned the "lay habit," and took the lay designation, writing himself down as plain James Andrew* in his "Hebrew Dictionary and Grammar," published in 1823. It was wrong of Mr. Andrew "having put his hand to the plough to turn back." He ought to have continued the exercise of his profession in Scotland, or gone to America or one of the colonies. But in England he had some excuse for concealing his clerical character, having too much reason to fear that his orders would be generally looked down upon as something inferior, if not spurious.

As principal of Addiscombe, Mr. Andrew had probably an income equal to the incomes of all the clergy of his native diocese put together. "Man, if you saw your minister now!" said a gentleman who had been in London, to a member of the Monymusk congregation, whom the writer knew; "he drives his carriage now!"

Wise and witty sayings of the Beraeans.

These English friends of the primus were all excellent men, and their memory will long be held in honour by the little church, which they so warmly befriended. A few of their personal characteristics, and of their noteworthy sayings, culled from their

* See "Life of John Skinner of Linshart," p. 159. 2nd edition.

letters to the primus, may interest the reader. They were all great church-and-state men, but they understood the value of spiritual independence, and the erastian shackles which bound the church sometimes fretted them. Mr. Stevens repeatedly, when regretting some ecclesiastical shortcoming, says, "We are afraid of being quite correct;" and he quotes some sayings of Jones of Naylands to a similar effect. Mr. Jones compared "the alliance between church and state to the coupling together of two dogs, one stronger than the other; the weaker dog must go where the stronger drags him."* Another of Mr. Jones's sayings was, that "a good man might be a politician, but he doubted if he would be a good politician."

Mr. Bowdler.

Mr. Bowdler of Eltham, a gentleman of independent means, was a regular correspondent of the primus's, and occasionally sent to him, as he did to some of the other bishops, a £10 note, to be given to one or two clergymen in straitened circumstances. The whole Bowdler family were more or less votaries of literature. Mr. Bowdler himself published a pamphlet of about 15 pages, in 1798, entitled "Reform or Ruin—Take your Choice." This pamphlet, from the critical character of the times and its equivocal title, obtained a large circulation, but hardly enough to satisfy its author. He encouraged printers throughout the kingdom to put forth local editions of it. To please him the primus had an edition of it printed by Chalmers,

* Letter to Primus, October 7th, 1800.

Aberdeen, and a copy of it is now before the writer. The pamphlet is a vigorous, plain-spoken production, well fitted to impress the public mind overwhelmed with excessive war expenditure and the "reign of terror," produced by the "severe" measures taken to keep out "French principles." Of course it was a moral, not a political reform that the author recommended. He shows, however, by several significant remarks, how dangerous it was to find fault at that time with anything in the existing institutions. For instance, he says, "of the King, if I knew ever so many bad things I would be cautious how I mentioned them, because I have no inclination to be hanged or transported." Again, "having no more desire to see the inside of Newgate than to try the air of Botany Bay, I shall be always cautious what I say about the Parliament."—(p. 6.) He gives four reasons for not desiring "a Republic on the French plan"—the fourth one being "one may buy gold too dear." "It was said the French Revolution would make the French Nation free and happy, but it has now gone on for seven or eight years and produced Confusion, Oppression, Cruelty, Poverty, all sorts of Mischief and Wickedness, and no good whatever. And if we are all to have our throats cut that our grandchildren may be free and happy, I think that is buying gold too dear." (p. 5.)

James Allan Park.

The only one amongst those London friends who was not an Englishman, was James Allan Park, who,

according to a waggish legal brother, "came naked stark" from Scotland. He became eventually the Honourable Mr. Justice Allan Park. He was a good man, and a great admirer of the primus. His model of a good man, as he wrote in one letter, was Mr. Stevens (whose life he published in 1814), but he never expected to equal him. He worked hard, but enjoyed but indifferent health, having, on repeated occasions, had to submit to a painful operation.

William Stevens.

The most interesting of this band of churchmen, and also the most regular of the primus's correspondents, was Mr. Stevens—"my man William"—or ουτις "Nobody," as he usually called himself. He was always sensible, cheerful, liberal, and obliging, with a perennial flow of playful humour. He was very social. Once a year, at least, he gave a dinner at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, to about thirty of his friends, at which the primus and his little church were duly toasted. In the year 1800 he established a club, which he called "Nobody's Club," and it continued to meet long after his death. Like many other good men he lived, as he mentioned in some of his letters, in fear of death, but when death came, as it did suddenly, he faced it with Christian courage. He had been talking with his friend, Mr. Bowdler, in his usual cheerful manner, but, when putting on his overcoat to go out to dinner, he was "suddenly seized with a violent pain in his chest. Mr. Bowdler asked the cause of his

sudden emotion. He answered calmly, '*Nothing but death!*'"*

Bishop Horsley.

Some light is thrown, in the correspondence, on the characters of two other eminent churchmen, who, by tongue and pen, greatly helped the suffering Scottish church—Bishop Horsley and Archdeacon Daubeny. The bishop, about the end of last century, is spoken of in some of the letters as suffering from the *res angusta domi*. When, in 1802, he was appointed to St. Asaph, his third see, Mr. Bowdler, who was a neighbour of his at Rochester, writes the primus (July 23, 1802), that his "translation to St. Asaph will give him what he never yet has had, an ample income, and enable him to provide well for his son." "To me," adds Mr. Bowdler, "he will be a great loss, for to me he has ever been a kind and obliging neighbour." The bishop held this last preferment only four years. Whatever provision he may have made for his son, there can be little doubt but that the future incumbent of St. Paul's, Dundee, was mainly dependent on self-help. The bishop showed himself friendly to the northern church to the very last, even when in great distress himself.

Archdeacon Daubeny.

Archdeacon Daubeny seems to have had a keen temper and unconciliatory manner. This is mentioned by one of the primus's correspondents soon after Daubeny's writings made him favourably known

* "Park's Life of Stevens," p. 181.

to the latter. At the archdeacon's request the primus reviewed some of his works in one or both of the high church periodicals, apparently to the entire satisfaction of the author. When, however, the primus's two sons waited upon the archdeacon in 1802, he gave them a cold reception, and refused to look at the MS. of their father's work on "Primitive Truth."

CHAPTER XIV.

1804-5.

Removal of last obstacle to compliance—Native qualified Clergymen coming in—Those with English preferment hang back—Laurencekirk Convocation—Dr. Sandford on the adoption of the Articles—Suggested alteration on Article XVII.—Proposed Preamble to Articles—General sense of Articles, "true sense"—Sir W. Forbes objects to Preamble—Preamble abandoned—Addresses on Subscription—All clergy sign Articles—Happy consequences of step—Dr. Sandford elected Bishop of Edinburgh—Circular to English and Irish Bishops—Answers to same—Bishop Horsley—Note on adoption of English Articles.

AT last Primus Skinner was about to witness the accomplishment of the great object of his twenty years patient labour, in the removal, under his own hand, of the last obstacle to compliance. Time had been his potent ally. In spite of all opposition, it had come to be seen that compliance was only a question of time, and already, in anticipation of it, several qualified clergymen had come over.

Messrs. Laing and Memis.

Those qualified clergymen, who felt that their lot was cast for life in Scotland, seemed the most favourable to union. Of these there were two in the

neighbourhood of Aberdeen, Mr. Laing, Peterhead, and Mr. Memis, Stonehaven. Each of these gentlemen, in addition to his clerical duties, practised medicine, and thus was bound by a double tie to the locality.

Clergymen with English preferment.

It was different with those qualified clergymen who enjoyed or hoped for preferment in England. Two of the Edinburgh clergymen were in this position—Mr. Alison of the Cowgate chapel, and Dr. Lloyd of St James's, Leith. The former was an English rector and prebendary; the latter was Regius Professor of Hebrew, at Cambridge. To these men union was by no means a simple question. Union in Scotland might mean severance in England. Before agreeing to unite, therefore, they resolved to make sure that the action would in no way compromise their position or prospects in England. After considerable delay and trouble they obtained satisfactory assurances on this point from high ecclesiastical authorities—Dr. Alison from the Archbishop of Canterbury, through Sir William Forbes and Sir William Scott—Dr. Lloyd from the Bishop of Lincoln, who strongly recommended him to "go into the union."

Dr. Sandford waited only for the adoption, by the Church, of the XXXIX. Articles. He had, as Mr. Stevens suggested, had a correspondence with the primus on the subject of union, and in that correspondence he had declared expressly that if the articles were adopted, not only would union become un-

objectionable, but continued separation would cease to be justifiable.

Laurencekirk Convocation.

The primus was now emboldened to submit the question of the adoption of the articles to the whole clergy of the church in convocation assembled. He proceeded in the matter, however, in the cautious, tentative way, that he had adopted on previous important occasions. He first submitted the matter to his own diocesan synod, which was held on August 24th, 1804. The synod approved. He then consulted his episcopal colleagues, and they also approved. Then (September 11th, 1804) he issued a circular letter to the whole of the native clergy, summoning them to a convocation at Laurencekirk, on Wednesday, October 24th, at ten o'clock, A.M. "The purpose of this meeting," as the circular stated, was, "in the most solemn manner to exhibit a public testimony of our conformity in doctrine and discipline with the Church of England, and thereby to remove every remaining obstacle to the union of the episcopalians in Scotland."

Dr. Sandford's View.

The primus sent a copy of the circular to Dr. Sandford, Edinburgh, who, in acknowledging receipt, repeated his "decided judgment" as to the happy effect which the projected step ought to have in the promotion of union. There was thus no doubt that

Dr. Sandford himself would come over, though he spoke only as "an individual." The clergy of "the Cowgate Chapel," of which Sir William Forbes was the great pillar, could also be reckoned upon.

Article XVII.—suggested alteration.

On the other hand the native clergy, though anxious to sign, would have liked some modification of one or two of the articles. "Some of them," the primus wrote to Dr. Sandford (September 25, 1804), "have suggested the propriety of a little alteration, particularly in the seventeenth Article, to free it from the absurd Calvinistic sense which some of its subscribers in England are daily forcing upon it." This indeed was now the whole obstacle to signature. The clergy were, to a man, strongly opposed to the Calvinistic views on predestination. Then, and apparently for long afterwards, both clergy and laity regarded these views as the main doctrinal barrier between themselves and their presbyterian fellow-countrymen. To sign the seventeenth article, therefore, which seemed *prima facie* to lay down the leading Calvinistic dogmas, was very abhorrent to their consciences. They would have liked an "alteration" on this article.

Preamble proposed.

The primus, however, came to see that alteration was impossible. "To subscribe the Articles in any amended form, might be considered as not subscribing

them at all." What he himself proposed, therefore, was something different, but in truth hardly, if at all, less objectionable, viz., to prefix to the copy of the articles to be subscribed by the clergy a preamble, "illustrating the true sense of them."

General sense of the Articles—the "true sense."

It was not exactly his own "sense" or interpretation of the articles that the primus understood by the "true sense," but rather that general sense which every article that has to be subscribed by men of all the parties that are tolerated in a church ought to bear—a sense identical with the views of no one party, but reconcilable with those of the whole. The English church, in the seventeenth article, taught "a general belief of predestination," but it did not teach it "in the rigorous exclusive Calvinistic sense, as establishing the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation." It said nothing of reprobation, and it ended with a caution against narrow views. There was thus room within the terms of the article for a wide variety of views, including, at least, all moderate Calvinists and Arminians.

Example of English Clergy.

And, in point of fact, within the English church men of almost every variety of view on the subject of predestination had subscribed the article, and ministered within the English church. On the whole, the English clergy had almost always been more Arminian

than Calvinistic. The primus naturally laid stress on the authority and the example of the English clergy, as did his son, John, at the convocation. But the example, which led him so far, might have carried him a step further. The English clergy, who held the same views as the Scotch, signed not only without hesitation, but also without a preamble. Why might not the Scotch do likewise?

Sir William Forbes objects to Preamble.

On the very eve of the convocation, the primus had this question brought home to him by an authority for which he and all his clerical brethren had the greatest respect—that of Sir William Forbes, Bart. Though still formally outside the native church, Sir William had done far more than any other layman in Scotland, or probably all the Scotch laymen in or outside the church, to bring about union. To him and Dr. Sandford the present movement was mainly due. Sir William was in England for a month or two before the meeting of convocation, but fortunately he returned to Edinburgh just in time to learn what was proposed to be done, and to communicate his view to the primus. After reading the primus's preamble and consulting with Dr. Sandford as to the propriety of adopting it, he wrote to the primus earnestly advising the abandonment of the preamble. "I am afraid," wrote the judicious baronet, "it is not within the compass of human language, or in the power of human intellect . . . to frame an interpretation of such abstruse and difficult points of theology, which

shall not be liable to objections of some sort." It would "be best," he recommended, "that the articles be subscribed agreeably to the act of 1792, as they stand in the service book of the Church of England . . . every subscriber explaining them to himself . . . according to the practice in England."

Preamble abandoned.

This letter determined the fate of the preamble. Apparently the primus was perfectly willing to give it up, if only the rest of the clergy did not object. It was more to remove his brethren's scruples than his own, that he drew it up. His brethren were, no doubt, as much influenced as he was by the reasoning and the authority of the exemplary Edinburgh baronet, and, so far as appears, there was no demand made at the convocation either for alteration in the articles, or for a preamble to define the "sense" of the obnoxious ones. This was a fortunate circumstance, for had either preamble or alteration been insisted on the labours of the convocation would have been in vain. The subscription of the clergy would have been held to be no subscription, and the compliance with the repeal act only nominal.

Addresses in favour of Subscription.

Short of either of those two compromising expedients, everything seems to have been done at the convocation to reconcile the clergy to subscription. There were four bishops and fifty clergymen of the second and third order present. Of these fifty-four,

only three—the primus, Bishop Jolly, and Mr. John Skinner, Forfar—appear to have entered into the difficulties of subscription. They, however, said all that seemed to be thought necessary for the satisfaction of the members. The primus preached a sermon which, at the request of the convocation, he published,* and in it he took a rapid survey of the articles, dwelling at some length on those—especially the seventeenth—to which he knew the clergy had some difficulty in reconciling themselves. He showed how far this article came short of "exclusive and irrespective predestination," when contrasted with the Lambeth articles, and when taken along with "God's promises . . . as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture," and with the other equally authoritative formularies of the English church — fortifying his position by quotations from four or five English dignitaries, including two bishops, and also from Mr. Overton, the great Calvinistic authority of the day.

Bishop Jolly showed, from a history of the articles, how necessary it was for the subscribers to bear in mind the different and antagonistic forces that had been at work in the production of them. Mr. John Skinner read some extracts from "a few of the most approved writers of the Church of England," to prove that the XXXIX. articles were neither Calvinistic, Antinomian, nor Pelagian, but in all points agreeable to the revealed Word and will of God."

* The Duty of holding the Doctrine of the Gospel—A sermon preached at a convocation of the bishops and clergy of the Scotch Episcopal Church, &c. By the Right Rev. John Skinner, Aberdeen, 1804.

The other members of the convocation confined themselves to a few remarks expressive of their acquiescence in the resolution to sign, and their satisfaction with the general agreement on the subject.

All the Clergy sign the Articles.

The result was, that all the forty-four clergymen present agreed to sign, and then and there did sign the articles "on a large sheet of vellum," with no other preamble than a few sentences, stating the reasons for which they signed, viz., witnessing to the truth, showing their "agreement with the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England," and compliance with the act of 1792. When all had signed, the precious sheet of vellum was "committed to the charge of the primus," to be "preserved in the Ecclesiastical chest at Aberdeen."

It may be conceived with what satisfaction the venerable prelate returned to Aberdeen with such a document in his pocket. He had at last reaped the reward of his long-continued and patient toils, and he "bore his sheaves with him." The sheet of vellum contained the church's attestation by seven-eighths of her clergy to the acceptance of the XXXIX. Articles, and compliance with the relief act. There was at last "a full end" of the penal period, and the church might breathe freely.

Happy effects of the step.

The primus soon had gratifying proofs of the happy effects produced by this important step. In compli-

ance with the resolution of the convocation, he sent an intimation of it at once to all the English bishops, and to the primate of Ireland, and, after a short interval, to the remaining Irish bishops. Fifteen English and six Irish bishops returned him gratifying letters of congratulation.

At home the effects were still more important and almost immediate. Within one month (November 19th, 1804) he received the submission of the Rev. Dr. Sandford and his congregation, which then met in a hall in West Regent Street, Edinburgh, and afterwards became St. John's, Princes Street. He would probably have got the submission of the important Cowgate congregation, now St. Paul's, York Place, about the same time, had not the then senior and only incumbent, Mr. Alison (as has been shown), hung back till he should receive assurance that the proposed union would not imperil his English preferments. That assurance was not received for a year. But his congregation refused to wait more than three months. On February 26, 1805, the primus received the most complete and gratifying letter of submission from the seven managers of the congregation. In the following month the Rev. Robert Morehead, the English clergyman of Leith, agreed to submit "to the spiritual authority of the Scottish bishops," and was chosen as "junior clergyman" of the Cowgate chapel. Mr. Alison, having at last received the desiderated assurances, also made his submission, November 24, 1805. Dr. Henry Lloyd, who succeeded Mr. Morehead at Leith, did likewise.

Election of Dr. Sandford.

The way was now pretty clear for the accomplishment of the primus's formerly-baffled project of securing the appointment of a clergyman, in English orders, for the see of Edinburgh. Bishop Abernethy Drummond, in accordance with his promise made twelve years before, resigned the see of Edinburgh. retaining the sub-diocese of Glasgow. There were now four clergymen of English orders in the diocese of Edinburgh. All the qualified clergy had, in fact, come over, except Mr. Vincent of St. George's, York Place.*

The state of the diocese was, therefore, such as fully warranted the belief that a suitable and harmonious appointment would be made by the two sets of clergy. In fact it was an understood thing that Dr. Sandford, who had done so much to unite the two, would be the unanimous choice of both. And so it happened. The excellent doctor was unanimously elected by the united Edinburgh clergy, January 15th, 1806, and consecrated at Dundee, February 9th (Sexagesima Sunday), by the primus, assisted by Bishops Watson and Jolly.

It need not be said that the primus was highly gratified at this judicious and opportune appointment,

* Mr. Vincent never came over, nor did his successor, Dr. Duncan; but Mr. Shannon (who was appointed in 1810) came over at once. The congregation had, in fact, come over before his appointment, and drawn up a constitution, "under which, the Chapel for the first time came under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Edinburgh." Mr. Shannon held the charge till 1841. "He always came to Church in full dress, knee-breeches and Hessian boots." (Letter of Rev. J. S. Wilson, 3rd June, 1887.)

so well calculated to help him over the union difficulties, and weld together the two classes of churchmen. It was the realisation, under better and more hopeful conditions, of his own Boucher scheme of twelve years before. That scheme was too markedly and prominently *his* scheme to be successful. This scheme, though also his undoubtedly, was shared by him with many others, especially by the Edinburgh churchmen, whom it most narrowly concerned. Instead of being a strange and comparatively unsympathetic importation from without, the new bishop was an Edinburgh citizen—an Edinburgh incumbent, well known to all classes of Edinburgh churchmen, and not differing greatly in matters of doctrine from any of them.

Perhaps the most hopeful circumstance in connexion with the election was the satisfaction with which it was regarded by the English clergy of the diocese. On the day of the election they met and passed two resolutions expressive of their lively sense of "the candid and generous liberality" of "the Presbyters of the Church in Scotland," and of "the charitable and enlightened spirit which had animated the members of the church in Scotland on this and on every measure by which the union had been accomplished." These resolutions were forwarded at once to the primus, and greatly pleased him. At the close of the consecration of the bishop-elect at Dundee, the primus gave expression to his satisfaction in a stirring address to his new "Right Reverend and Dearly beloved Brother," which, says his son, "sensibly affected the whole auditory." In this address the primus quoted the opinion which Sir William Forbes had expressed in a

letter to him, that to the new bishop the church "owed the happy union that had taken place." *

Circular to English Bishops.

At the suggestion of Bishop Horsley, the primus addressed a circular letter to the bishops of the English church, and to the two Irish archbishops, intimating "the progress made and making in the happy work of episcopal union in Scotland, and the advancement to the Scottish episcopate of one of the English-ordained clergymen, in charge of a congregation in Scotland." In the circular he stated that the native congregations were then "about sixty in number," and were "supplied by fifty clergymen," all native. "A few years ago," he added, "there were about twenty-four congregations in a state of separation from the Scottish episcopal church, and supplied by clergymen of English or Irish ordination." "Thirteen of these congregations had of late joined the communion of the Scottish episcopal church." The thirteen were situated in Edinburgh, Leith, Kelso, Glasgow, Stirling, Perth, Arbroath, Stonehaven, Cruden, Peterhead, Banff, and Elgin. Eleven congregations still remained apart in the following places, viz., Edinburgh (St. George's), Musselburgh, Haddington, Dundee, Dunkeld, Brechin, Montrose, Aberdeen, Old Deer, Ayr, and Dumfries. By the close of the primus's administration, the number was reduced to five—and at least one of these, St. Paul's, Aberdeen, found then and still finds in its constitution serious legal obstacles to union.

* Annals, p. 410.

Answers of English Bishops—Bishop Horsley.

In acknowledgment of his circular, the primus had very gratifying letters from several of the leading English bishops—Porteous of London ; Horsley, now of St. Asaph ; Douglas of Salisbury, &c. Bishop Horsley, as has been seen, had always urged a patient and waiting policy on the union question, and he now claimed that the event had justified his counsels. He had "some personal satisfaction" in recalling what he had said to Bishop Abernethy Drummond "many years" before, viz., that "the business of union would certainly do itself, if he was not too much in a hurry to drive it on."

The business may be said to have gone on "doing itself" for the last eighty years. It is not yet quite done, and there have been several significant proofs of the folly of attempting to "drive it on too much in a hurry."

NOTE TO CHAPTER XIV.

THE ADOPTION OF THE ENGLISH ARTICLES.

The adoption, without change, in the nineteenth century, by one church of the articles of another church, drawn up in the sixteenth century, was certainly an extraordinary step, and one that would probably never have been taken by a church which enjoyed complete freedom of action. The articles were either too old, or not old enough. They were too old to be in complete harmony with the views of the age, and not old enough to be venerable and beyond criticism. They were also, like most modern confessionals, too long, and too precise and minute in their definitions of subjects which are beyond man's full comprehension. Creeds adapted to all times, all nations, and men of all temperaments, should, like the ancient creeds, be expressed in

general terms, which permit of "alternative explanations," and are reconcilable with the views of earnest men of all *tolerable* parties. The English articles probably err in the way of narrowness less than most doctrinal standards, and supply standing-room for men of widely diverse views. Undoubtedly, the adoption of them had, on the whole, a beneficial effect on the little Scottish church. It seems to have checked the rage for speculation in mysterious doctrines, and it compelled the observance of a more tolerant tone in regard to the Calvinistic views.

CHAPTER XV.

1805-1808.

Revision of Canons—Laws now indispensable—Primus averse to the convocation of a General Synod — Obstacle, Scotch office—Attempted disruption of the united Banff congregation—Dr. Grant, Dundee, attacks Scotch office and union—These attacks help, rather than hinder, union—Lead to inquiry—English Bishops—Dampier of Rochester—Bishop Horsley's answer to Dr. Grant—Solid sympathy of English bishops with Banff people — The "Junior clergy" anglicising—"Complete conformity with England"—Party that sought conformity—Needless alarm on the subject—Primus committed to a course—Three Bishops at Forfar—John Skinner writes pamphlet in defence of Scotch office—Primus announces its publication to Synod—Alarm of English friends—Circulation confined to North—Made no sensation—General Synod still feared by Primus—Dread of Southern influence—Irregular action—Dr. Gleig's election—Test imposed on Dr. Gleig—Dr. Gleig's consecration—Last consecration performed by Primus—Note, Scotch offices.

Revision of the Canons.

ONLY one great measure remained unaccomplished in the list of Primus Skinner's projected reforms of 1792 ; but this was one that was not only highly necessary in itself, but also indispensable for the crowning and consolidation of the rest. This was the revision of the canons, or, as it might more correctly be stated, the provision of a proper code of

canons, and a proper legislative body for canon-making.

Laws now indispensable.

With "two nations struggling" within her, or a union in diversity, the church required for the maintenance of order and harmony, a body of well-defined laws, made by an authority which all orders and degrees of men in the church might respect. A provisional measure of six articles had indeed been passed to secure the English congregations in the enjoyment of their rights. But these articles had only the authority of the episcopal synod. It was time to take steps for providing something more complete and more permanent. A general synod was required, or a third Laurencekirk convention.

Primus opposes.

Contrary to what might have been expected, the primus showed no desire to take this necessary and crowning step. On the contrary, he set his face against it, even when it was pressed upon him by his best friends

The Scotch office the obstacle.

The cause of his backwardness was, without all doubt, his fear for the safety of the Scotch office. He feared to trust the regulation of the northern use to any but northern hands. The outcries and protests of certain members of English congregations had needlessly alarmed him. The complaints of such people

were soon admitted to be wholly unreasonable. The English congregations had nothing to do with the Scotch office. Their own office, their whole service, in fact, was made as sure to them now as before the union. As congregations, the union made no difference to them. After the union as before it, they might be as English on the Forth or on the Tay, as on the Thames. But this perfect freedom for themselves was not enough for some members of the English congregations. Though they were never called upon to use the Scotch office, they held that by union with a church which tolerated it, they made themselves responsible for it. If it was not sound, they were bound to "come out and be separate from" those who tolerated it. Thus the call to union was resisted, and accomplished union was broken or disturbed.

Banff Union assailed.

The primus had just had an instance of this divisive action in his own diocese. As early as 1792, the two congregations in Banff united. In the year 1805, however, a Captain David Cumming instituted a suit in the Court of Session for the dissolution of the union. He failed in the attempt indeed, but in addition to unspeakable annoyance and trouble to all concerned, his action had the effect of saddling the congregation with a debt of nearly £300.

Dr. Grant's attack.

In the same year a Dr. Alexander Grant, Dundee, responded to the call for union by publishing a tract

entitled "An Apology for continuance in the Communion of the Church of England." This was a title that begged the whole question at issue between unionists and separatists. If the English episcopal and the Scotch episcopal churches were in full communion, an English churchman did not, while in Scotland, leave the communion of his own church by joining the Episcopal Church of Scotland. On the contrary, he "continued" in communion with his own church, and only separated from his own church when he separated from the Scotch episcopal, which was its representative in Scotland. Dr. Grant, however, took a very narrow view of the matter, holding that the toleration of a different communion office made the Scotch a different church from the English. He sent a copy of his tract to each of the English bishops.

Attacks helped the cause rather than hindered it.

These two attacks, in the end, did more good than harm to the cause of union. They led to a full and authoritative explanation of the true state of the case, and this evoked from the leading English bishops distinct and even substantial tokens of sympathy, coupled with decided protests against the narrow views of the church's constitution, on which the attacks were based.

Bishop Dampier of Rochester.

The case of Bishop Dampier shows how easy it was to convince an English bishop of the baselessness of Dr. Grant's charge. Mr. Bowdler, who was a neigh-

bour of the bishop's, was asked to wait upon him and offer explanations. "I told him," says Mr. Bowdler to the primus (unpublished letter, June 26, 1806), "I could give a very short and satisfactory answer to the whole" charge, viz., "that every English-ordained Clergyman who joined the Communion of the Scotch Episcopal Church, had his option to use the English Eucharistical Liturgy, if he preferred it. The Bishop said he thought it a sufficient answer."

Bishop Horsley's Letter to Dr. Grant.

Dr. Grant never published any letter received by him from any of the English bishops, in acknowledgment of his tract. But one of the bishops—Horsley—sent the primus a copy of his answer to Grant. In that letter Horsley said, that in his judgment "the Clergymen of English or Irish ordination, exercising their functions as in Scotland, without uniting with the Scottish Bishops, were doing nothing better than keeping alive a schism . . . I find nothing in your Tract," added the bishop, "to alter my mind upon these points."

It is clear from the letters which the primus received from the other English bishops, when he intimated to them the adoption by his church of the XXXIX. articles, that, in this letter of his, Bishop Horsley expressed their views as well as his own. If any of them had expressed a different view to Dr. Grant, it certainly would not have been withheld from the public, for the doctor continued to oppose, and criticise, and publish.

English Bishops' genuine sympathy with Banff people.

There can be no doubt of the genuineness of the English bishops' sympathy with the Banff congregation in the *Cumming* case. The expression of it took the form of solid cash—the sum amounting to nearly the whole of the costs with which the congregation had been burdened by the suit. The bishops gave liberal subscriptions when applied to by Bishop Horsley, who on this, as on so many other occasions, proved himself the church's friend in need.

The "Junior Clergy" anglicising.

The primus might have been re-assured by the issue of these two onslaughts, and let the "two nations" and the two offices go on "struggling" for supremacy within the church. Probably he did become less apprehensive of danger from without, but, strangely enough, he now began to fear danger from within. He feared, not that the English churchmen would argue the Scotch out of their office; but, that the Scotch churchmen would of themselves abandon the office, without either argument or reason. They would leave the Scotch office for the English, not through natural elective affinity, but through ambition and vanity. According to his son, the primus "had reason to suspect, that there were among the junior clergy of Scottish ordination, some whose ambition was to be considered as clergymen of the Church of England," and who therefore wanted to get rid of the

Scottish office "for no other reason but that it was Scottish." Certainly it was a very strange sort of ambition this!—to affect to be considered clergymen of a church that not only would not admit them to its livings, but which would not even suffer them for one day to speak from its pulpits or minister at its altars! The primus, however, never probably expected that the reasons he assigned for the juniors' desire for uniformity and conformity should be taken literally.

"*Complete Conformity*" *with England.*

He put the matter simply, and without assumptions or insinuations, in a letter to Mr. Bowdler (June 23rd, 1807)—"It is a circumstance well known, that a party has been formed for bringing our humble Church to what they would call complete conformity with the Church of England." It seems doubtful if there was any "party" "formed" for the above purpose. No doubt there was then, as there probably always has been, a certain number of churchmen who desired "complete conformity" with England for very "good," though not for "sufficient," reasons. Conformity would have broken down at once the wall of partition between the qualified and the native congregations, and put an end to the chief cause of division and dissension. This was a good reason. It was not a sufficient reason, because the main body of the native churchmen believed that their office contained a fuller and more accurate presentation of Eucharistic truth than the English office did, and they were consequently

altogether averse to giving up the use of it. To have denied these churchmen the use of their office would have been very unjust to them, and also a very unwise thing for the church itself. The toleration of two offices was an excellent and very needful training in the church's great attribute and duty of wide comprehensiveness.

The Composition of "the Party."

Whatever may have been the case when the primus wrote, the abettors of "complete conformity" have usually been, not "junior clergymen," but laymen of high standing and influence. If there was any such party amongst the junior clergy at that time, it must have been a very small one. No trace of it appears in history.

Effect of the Alarm.

However, the primus sounded the alarm, and the effect was certainly striking, and, to himself, not a little disquieting. He seemed scared by the sound himself had made! And not without reason, for, as will be seen, there instantly came back upon him, like so many echoes, vehement protests from his best friends and fellow-workers on the Thames and the Forth—from Bishop Sandford and others in Edinburgh — from Messrs. Bowdler and James Allan Park, in London. These men appear to have been thrown into a sort of panic by the course just taken by the primus. It was in the teeth of all their counsels and recommendations. They had been working hard, not only for

union, but also for improved finance—collecting north and south for the episcopal fund, and urging "quietness and confidence," and abstention from controversy. Here, then, thought they, is the primus himself wantonly counter-working us, and deliberately stirring up the embers of controversy with his own hand!

Primus Committed to Publication.

The primus was greatly troubled by the earnest protests of these excellent friends, and it is evident that, if he could, he would gladly have given way to them, and kept silence about the Scotch office. But, unfortunately, before he had got even a hint of their opposition, he had already committed himself to the publication of a work in defence of the office.

Three Bishops at Forfar.

On their way from the consecration of Bishop Sandford at Dundee (February 9, 1806), Bishops Skinner, Jolly, and Watson, stayed two days with Mr. John Skinner at Forfar. The result of this visit was the publication, by Mr. Skinner, of a pamphlet in defence and illustration of the Scotch office. Whether it was the bishops, or Mr. Skinner, that suggested the publication,* does not distinctly appear, but it is certain that the bishops encouraged Mr. Skinner in the prosecution of the work, and that from this time he made rapid progress with it.

* Mr. Skinner speaks of the work as "the task which his ecclesiastical superiors assigned to" him.—Annals, p. 463.

Primus announces the Publication.

A few months afterwards (August 20th, 1806), the annual synod of Aberdeen was held—the triennial general meeting of the Friendly Society being held at the same time. Most of the members of the latter society, including the three bishops, Watson, Jolly, and Macfarlane, being thus in Aberdeen at the time, attended the synod, and heard the bishop's charge. The charge was something more than the usual yearly review of the general condition of the diocese and of the church. It was a northern manifesto. Addressing, in the northern capital, almost the whole of the northern and native clergy, the primus took naturally a very decidedly northern line. He made it very plain that he "thought scorn of" the Anglicising "junior Clergy." "The silly affectation" of Anglicising, he said, "if allowed to prevail in the minds of our Clergy, might tempt them to relinquish the use of our truly primitive Communion office—for no other reason but because it is Scotch, and has been found fault with by some, who either know nothing about it, or are evidently prejudiced against it." It need not be doubted that this thrust at the Anglicisers was highly appreciated and applauded by the highly sympathetic audience. The three bishops joined with the clergy of the diocese in requesting the primus to publish the charge. He did so, and appended to page 20 a note intimating that "A Clergyman of the diocese of Dunkeld would, in a few months, publish a new edition of the 'Scotch Communion Office,' with a

prefatory discourse on the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice laid down in that office, and shown to accord in every respect with the doctrine of the united Church of England and Ireland, &c."

Messrs. Allan Park and Bowdler alarmed.

This looks like a plain business note—but to southern churchmen, on both sides of the Tweed, it sounded as a veritable war note—a trumpet-call to battle on the long smouldering, but once fiercely burning question, of the Eucharist. The effect was sudden, and to the primus and his northern friends, almost startling. After a time protests and remonstrances, of the most decided and plain-spoken nature, came thick on the primus from London and from Edinburgh. He had asked Mr. James Allan Park to accept the dedication of the projected publication, and that well-tried and zealous friend had, nothing doubting, graciously consented. But one day a friend, probably Mr. Bowdler, called upon Mr. Park, and instantly filled his mind with grievous alarm and apprehension. "A most warm and zealous friend of your Church," he wrote to the primus (April 20, 1807), "has called upon me, and upon telling him the intentions of your son, he stated such strong reasons to me against the propriety of the publication at the present time as has completely convinced me that we ought at least to pause, and not publish it till our subscription [for the episcopal fund] is closed, and possibly till all the Episcopal Clergy in Scotland have acceded to your jurisdiction." The friend's "conversation"

made a "deep impression on" Mr. Park's "mind." At this stage of his long letter, which was written in court, the coming on of a "cause" made him pause in the middle of a sentence. He returned, however, to the subject, and "most earnestly deprecated" publication, from fear of controversy and the probable effect of controversy on the ignorant and prejudiced, and also because such a publication was not "essential." The English congregations knew that they might retain the English office; the Scotch congregations "required no apology or defence" for their use of the Scotch. Mr. Park's opposition was thus very firm and decided. Still more so was that of Mr. Bowdler. To him the primus wrote next month (May 14, 1807), referring to Mr. Park's objections, and elaborately answering them. Mr. Bowdler replied on May 25, showing that he was not only not convinced by the primus's arguments, but still held resolutely to his opposition to publication. "Believe me, My Good Sir," he said, "you are not aware of the effect which your son's book will *now* have, be it ever so good. Recollect the dreadful schisms in the English Non-juring Church in the last century respecting the same points. . . . I am now engaged in a very painful correspondence on this subject. I hope I may allay the heat of others, but if your son's book comes out it will be all over. *Mr. Skinner should publish nothing at this time*, or no man can tell what the consequences may be."

As has been said, the primus was evidently much troubled with the resolute opposition of these excellent and long-tried friends. In vain he strove to persuade them that their apprehensions were altogether ground-

less—that his son's work being merely illustrative and explanatory would calm rather than excite controversy. They would not be persuaded. The most uncontroversial publication might, at that time, they urged, stir up controversy on that subject. No risk should be run.

Work circulated only in the North.

Had these objections been urged a few months earlier the primus would, no doubt, have at once recommended the abandonment of the proposed work. As it was, he stopped short of that course. The work was not suppressed, for already it was not only written, but one half of it was in print; and the primus and his son had so fully and widely committed themselves to publication that they could not bring themselves to entirely countermand it. What they did was to confine the circulation as much as possible to the north of Scotland. The primus made intimation of this intention in a pretty long letter to Mr. Bowdler (June 23, 1807), in which he said, "It is but an act of justice to all concerned to let the work speak for itself, at least in this part of Scotland, where a due regard to my character is yet of some credit to the Scottish Episcopacy." "At the same time," he added, "you may rest assured that without your and Mr. Allan Park's approbation no publication of the work shall take place in England." * This "stipulation was strictly observed." The "little work was never advertised south of the Tay."

* In the year 1817 the work was noticed in the September number of the "Anti-Jacobin Review."

It would not probably have mattered much where it had been advertised and circulated. It was not written in a style that could give reasonable offence to any sensible and tolerant English churchman, and it was plainly meant for "defence, not for defiance."

Work made no Sensation.

In the north of Scotland, to which the circulation was confined, the work, though well received, produced no stir or sensation. There the merits and the alleged defects of the Scotch office were sufficiently well known to most intelligent churchmen, whether English or native; and the enemies of the office had already, with no great effect, tried their worst against it. Men like Dr. Grant or Captain Cumming might maintain that certain passages in the office could only bear a certain extreme interpretation, but the native churchmen knew that their clergy who used the office put no such interpretation on the passages, and the English churchmen living amongst them could not well be ignorant of the same fact.

A General Synod—the True Policy.

On the whole, this semi-authoritative interposition on behalf of the Scotch office was not encouraging, and it would have been well if the primus had now taken the oft-tendered advice of his southern friends, and left the office question for a time to "do itself." He could not but see now that there was no real or at least no immediate danger to the Scotch office, and

that he might safely let things take their course till the church could meet in general synod to regulate, with authority, this and all other delicate questions affecting the whole church.

Primus dreads Southern influence.

But to the calling of a general synod the primus was still averse. The maintenance of the Scotch office was his main object and anxiety, and further, he had no faith in the southern brethren, whether English or Scotch. He manifestly dreaded the influence of those brethren in council, and so, in the policy which he pursued for the preservation of the office, he did not consult the whole church, but merely took casual counsel with his like-minded brethren of the north. This, however, as the primus himself soon came to see, was, in every way, a mistake.

Irregular Action—Dr. Gleig's Election.

Meantime, however, he took several irregular and uncanonical steps which excited considerable prejudice against him in the south. He continued to throw obstacles in the way of Dr. Gleig of Stirling's elevation to the episcopate, and this was, so far as appears, mainly on account of distrust of his fidelity to the native office. In the month of September, 1808, Dr. Gleig was, within a fortnight, elected bishop by the clergy of two dioceses—by those of Dunkeld (for the third time) on September 14, the votes standing as three to two—by the clergy of Brechin on September 28 (for the second

time), and by a unanimous vote. On the first occasion, when he learned from a protest by Mr. John Skinner, Forfar, one of the minority of two, that the episcopal college was against his appointment, Dr. Gleig at once resolved to withdraw from the field.

Test imposed on Dr. Gleig.

On the second of these occasions there was no protest offered from the diocese, and there was nothing in the circumstances of the election or in the character of the bishop-elect to warrant a refusal to confirm the election. No refusal was made, but a test was imposed which might, in effect, have been equivalent to a refusal. Dr. Gleig was called upon to sign a declaration binding himself to "strenuously recommend, by his own practice and by every other means in his power," the use of the Scotch office. This declaration was drawn up by the primus, after consultation with Bishops Jolly and Macfarlane, when these three northern prelates met in Aberdeen to consecrate Mr. Torry, the elect of Dunkeld, October 12, 1808. Mr. Torry's signature was first obtained to the declaration, but this was obviously a mere form, and manifestly procured in order to serve as a "precedent." Evidently Mr. Torry's election had been confirmed at once, and all arrangements for his consecration completed, before the declaration was even thought of. It would never have been thought of for *him*—but his signature constituted a precedent. And "having so satisfactory a precedent," the primus wrote to Dr. Gleig (Oct., 1808), he was "determined, by God's

grace, to abide by it in any future promotion, at least of a Scotch ordained Presbyter." It was easy for Dr. Gleig to accept this test. He was a northern man himself, had always used the Scotch office, and was at that time the only clergyman in the diocese of Edinburgh who used it. He therefore signed the declaration, his election was confirmed, and he was consecrated in St. Andrew's Church, Aberdeen, Oct. 30, 1808, by the three Aberdeenshire bishops—Skinner, Jolly, and Torry.

His Last Consecration.

This was the last occasion on which the venerable primus laid hands on a bishop-elect. It was not given him to prove, "in any future promotion," the firmness of his determination to "abide by" his Scotch office test, and apparently none of his successors took it up. So far as appears it was never heard of again at a consecration.*

* The writer at one time believed that this test continued to be imposed at consecrations till one of the English bishops-elect objected to it as unconstitutional. After due enquiry, however, it appeared that the test had never been "recorded in the Episcopal Register." He then fully concurred in the conclusion of Bishop Wilson of Glasgow, that it was a mere "temporary expedient."—See Life of Bishop Gleig, p. 261.

NOTE TO CHAPTER XV.

THE SCOTCH OFFICE.

It will be seen that when, at last, a general synod was assembled (1811), the primus found no difficulty whatever in securing the enactment of a canon which made the Scotch office supreme, or of "primary

authority" in the church. He got all that he asked, but, as experience seems to prove, that was more than was good for the permanent interests of the office. Equality would have been a better position for the Scotch office than supremacy. It would have been less likely to excite discontent and agitation for repeal of the canon. Few churchmen would have objected to equal toleration of the Scotch office, whereas supremacy could only be maintained so long as the balance of power remained with the north. It fell as soon as a general synod was assembled (1862), in which the south obtained the ascendency. It was then made not equal with the English office, but secondary. The southern brethren, following the example of 1811, turned its own canon against the north, and made the English office of primary authority. The next general synod will possibly put the offices on a footing of equality. It may also insist upon revision.

CHAPTER XVI.

Deaths in the family—Mrs. Skinner—His father—Publishes his father's works, with Memoir—Father and son compared—Contrasted—Learning and Literary pursuits—Social habits—Anecdotes—The "Wicked Man"—Charles Halket, &c.—His two sons as advisers—John backs up Bishop Gleig—Primus still favourable to adaptation of English Service—Writes to Bishop Gleig regarding charge—Bishop Gleig mild but firm—Presses his argument too far—The real extent of his contention—John Skinner, Forfar, interposes—Primus agrees to summon General Synod.

IN the midst of the worry and vexation caused by the opposition to the publication of his son's work on the Scotch office, the primus suffered the greatest of all bereavements.

Death of Mrs. Skinner.

Mrs. Skinner died on March 10, 1807. Her death was rather sudden, resulting from over-fatigue and exertion while attending, on "a most tempestuous day, the death-bed of a friendless, strange lady." The loss was irreparable, for Mrs. Skinner was an invaluable help-meet in pastoral as well as in domestic matters.

This bereavement was quickly followed by another, which, however, was more in the course of nature. Soon after his wife's death, the primus invited his aged father to come to Aberdeen, and spend the remainder of his days under his roof, at Berrybank. The aged

poet-priest had, it appears, looked for this filial invitation, and he gratefully accepted it, giving fervent and touching expression to his feelings in his letter of acceptance.*

His Father's Death.

Both father and son appear to have anticipated no small pleasure and profit from this late re-union under the same roof, indulging in happy thoughts of reading together and interchanging ideas on high and holy subjects as "the night came" on. But it was not to be. The old man came to his son's house only to die. Though apparently in his usual health when he came, he was taken suddenly ill ten days afterwards, and almost instantly expired. It was something, however, to die *there*. As it happened, his great grandchildren, from Forfar, were in the house at the time; his grandson, William, was in Aberdeen; his favourite son closed his eyes. He thus passed to his rest amid his children, his children's children, and his children's grandchildren, having "seen peace upon Israel" and many happy changes, due largely to the zeal and energy of his children and grandchildren.

Publishes his Father's Works, with Memoir.

The primus had been always a loving and dutiful son. Now that his father was gone, he set to work to

* See "Skinner of Linshart," p. 195 (2nd edition), "If anything," wrote the aged father, "had been necessary to increase the affection which I have always had for you, both as a son and a Bishop, it would have been your proposal at parting, and your pathetic way of asking from me a favour, which the doubts and fears I always had prevented my asking from you."

raise to him the most fitting memorial. He collected the chief of his father's unpublished works, and, in 1809, he gave to the world three volumes of them—two in prose and one in verse—prefaced by a lengthy and highly appreciative memoir of the author from his own filial pen.

Father and Son—Compared.

It is easy to see from the memoir that father and son agreed in all their opinions and views, not only in religion, but also in philosophy—including Hutchinsonianism—which, however, the son, from the practical character of his mind, held in a very different way from the father. The two also went always hand in hand in all matters of church policy and in family affairs.

Contrasted.

The two did not agree more in views and in policy than they differed in the character of their minds, and in their intellectual habits and pursuits. The father was lively, imaginative, poetical, highly speculative—sensitive as an Æolian harp to every passing breath of sentiment. The son was grave, dignified, practical and matter-of-fact.

Learning and Literary Pursuits.

In his pursuit of learning, the father was guided mainly by his desire of knowledge for its own sake, or by the impulse of a dominant theory, or the mere whim of the moment. The son, in his quest for knowledge, had always in view some distinct practical

aim, such as the preparation of a sermon, a lecture, or a charge, or the composition of a catechism, or a treatise on church defence. The father's learning was more profound and extensive than the son's, but not of the same marketable value. The father's compositions will live in literature; the son's compositions brought him, in his own day and generation, high standing and influence and solid earthly advantages.

Social Habits.

In society the two men differed greatly, but probably less than is generally supposed. The father was like Bishop Robert Forbes, a "chearful gentleman," * full of wit, humour and ceaseless vivacity, not disdaining on occasion to "rise and shak' a fit." The son had less "mirth and wit," but he was by no means deficient in a sense of humour.

Anecdotes.

The writer, in his early days, heard from aged churchmen of the diocese of Aberdeen, including the primus's own son, the late Bishop William Skinner, and the Rev. Alexander Bruce, of Banff, several anecdotes, which seem conclusive on this head.

Mr. Innes's "wicked man."

According to Mr. Bruce, the primus was struck with the very broad Scotch accent of Mr. Innes, of Meiklefolla, and when he was on his confirmation tour

* Craven's "Journals, &c., of Bishop Robert Forbes." London: Skeffington & Son, 1886. See p. 183, "I am all affronted in not desiring the chearful gentleman to say Grace in my House."

he used to say "that Mr. Innes's 'wicked man' haunted him all the way to Turriff." He alluded, of course, to the homely pastor's doric rendering of the first sentence in the prayer book—"When the wicked man turneth away, &c." *

On two different occasions the writer heard Bishop William Skinner relate the two following humorous anecdotes, which he said he had heard his father give from his own experience. One day the primus was returning from Old to New Aberdeen. It was the day of the "Aulton Market," or annual Old Aberdeen fair. As he proceeded on his way the primus overtook a man who had been in the market and had freely "mixed" his drinks. He was thus soliloquising—"Whisky, porter, rum, beer and brandy! By George, lads, if ye dinna 'gree better, I'll throw ye i' the gutter!"

Charles Halket.

On another occasion the primus was on a visit to Mr. Charles Halket, of Inveramsay, who (see chap. vi.), in the words of a local half-crack wag,† went on

* During the last age it was not unusual for Aberdeen churchmen to make use of the term, "the wicked man," to denote the commencement of the service. The writer has more than once heard John Rough, a well-known beadle of St. Andrew's, King Street, exhorting the youthful churchman to be sure and be in church "afore the wicked man"—(the weck-et mahn).

† In his boyish days, the writer heard much of the smart sayings and doings of the above-mentioned wag—a man of university education, who became insane and lived at a farm-house. He was generally known as "Wud Mr. Walker." The Laird of Glack had erected a stone fence or dyke on which he greatly prided himself, but his satisfaction abated

"bannin', bannin' a' the week, and del'in dock-ens o' Sunday." After dinner the laird took the bishop into the barn, where winnowing was going on. In stepping incautiously about, the laird broke his shins upon a firlot measure, and appeared greatly disconcerted. Whereupon one of the workmen whispered the bishop to step outside for a few minutes, as the laird "never was himsel'" after an incident of that sort, till he had relieved himself by the utterance of a few oaths.

The writer has heard some other anecdotes of the primus, but on more questionable authority. One of these has been told of another clergyman, and may indeed have happened to many. It is said that one day, going out the Skene road, he knocked at a door and asked who was master of the house. The man whom he addressed desired him to walk in and he might learn for himself, as he and his wife had just been engaged in the attempt to settle that question between them!

His two Sons as Advisers.

At this time the primus received great aid and comfort in his counsels and labours from his two sons, John and William. Both were very like-minded with

when he found that his neighbours kept continually clambering over the fence or walking on the top of it, to the great detriment of its efficiency. In his wrath he offered five pounds reward to any one who would give information leading to the detection of any such offender. On hearing this, "Wud Mr. Walker" set off instantly and walked on the top of the fence from one end to the other; he then proceeded to Glack House, reported what he had done, and demanded the promised reward! The saying in the text regarding Mr. Halket is usually told in a more alliterative and forcible style, and this is no doubt the true one.

himself, and very dutiful to him, especially William, who, he used to say, never crossed him in anything.

The larger share of the family ability and energy fell to John, the elder, "a man of singular force of character," as the late Bishop Forbes, of Brechin, said of him—one who was always in the front rank of church reformers, urging activity and onward movement at all risks. He met, as may be supposed, with but little direct encouragement in those days. Seldom did he see any immediate or tangible fruit of his labours, and for thanks he generally had only a surly rebuff. This was his reward when (in 1819) he urged on his bishop the holding of regular diocesan synods;* and again when (in 1824) he urged on the whole church the policy of admitting the representatives of the laity to a place in the councils of the church. The first decided check of the sort, however, he received as early as 1810, and that from his own father.

John backs up Bishop Gleig.

In spite of his questionable action in opposing the election of Dr. Gleig, in 1809, John is found, in 1810, boldly backing up Bishop Gleig against Bishop Skinner.

Bishop Gleig delivered his primary charge at Brechin, in August, 1810. It contained an earnest protest against the laxity which prevailed in Brechin and in the other north-eastern dioceses in the reading of the liturgy, each clergyman altering and interpolating as it seemed good in his own eyes: it also contained a

* See Neale's "Life of Bishop Torry," *in loco.*

powerful plea, not only for liturgical uniformity and conformity, but also for ecclesiastical law and order in general. John Skinner, from Forfar, was present at the delivery of the charge, and he was a delighted and demonstrative hearer. "Your son thanked me," wrote Bishop Gleig to the primus, "even with tears in his eyes, and squeezed my hand in a manner which indicated gratitude which I can never forget." (Annals, 489.)

Primus still favourable to adaptation.

The charge, when published, produced a very different impression on the primus himself. This was very natural in him, for, from his very earliest years, he had been accustomed to the freest liturgical adaptation. His father adapted more or less of every English office, especially the occasional offices, and he had evidently been taught, and believed, that a certain amount of adaptation was absolutely necessary in order to reconcile Scotch worshippers to the use of the English liturgy. "Entire conformity in even the minutest article to the English Rubrics" he thought "slavish," and all but impracticable in Scotland. He wrote, therefore, to Bishop Gleig, gently remonstrating with him, and forwarding him a copy of his own charge of 1806, which explained his views on the subject.

Bishop Gleig mild but firm.

Considering the relations which had hitherto subsisted between these two eminent men, Bishop Gleig certainly received this remonstrance in a very creditable and brotherly spirit. He returned a soft but firm

answer, entering into the subject in his usual clear and incisive style. His reasoning is conclusive against the irregular and unauthorised adaptations of the time—"made upon" no "principle," and more or less different "in every chapel." He himself found that he could not officiate for any one of his own clergy without "taking a lesson from him how to read before going in the morning into the chapel."

It was out of the question to leave the conduct of the service entirely to "the judgment or caprice" of every individual clergyman. Thus far the bishop was on sure ground. If there was to be adaptation, it ought to be regulated by the authority of the whole church.

Argument pressed too far.

But this was a very different thing from forbidding any adaptation, and advocating "uniformity in prayer," and "even uniformity in dress." Very good reasons might have been given for refusing to go along with the bishop when he proceeded to say, "I see not why we may not adopt the daily service of the English Church *verbatim*, and even the decent habits of her Clergy, to show the people that we are in full communion with her; as well as St. Paul circumcised Timothy, and purified himself in the temple to show that he was in full communion with the Church at Jerusalem." For "full communion," *verbatim* uniformity was, no doubt, desirable, but it was not necessary, and for parts of the church at least, and for certain classes of churchmen, it was probably in-

expedient. At that time, much more than now, the Scottish ideal of the proper and the edifying in worship differed from the English. It was the consciousness of this fact, and not any mere "kind of patriotism," that was at the bottom of the northern repugnance to complete conformity. The primus had more to say for himself in this matter than, in recent times, has been generally admitted.

Real extent of Bishop Gleig's Contention.

It was not, however, for complete conformity to the English service, but against unauthorised deviations from it, that Bishop Gleig contended. Here his position was unassailable; and, generally, his proposed reforms were so obviously sound and seasonable, that only by his distrust of the southern brethren can the primus have been restrained from submitting them to a general synod.

John Skinner, Forfar, interposes.

It was at this stage of the controversy that his son John interposed with the best effect. The primus did not reply to Bishop Gleig's letter, but he made some reference to it in a letter to John. This supplied John with an opening, of which he took full advantage. He wrote his father a very long letter (Feb. 6, 1810), in which he discussed the whole subject fully and plainly. He believed that Bishop Gleig's zeal was a "zeal according to knowledge," and he thought it a pity that the two zealous bishops "should not act cordially and in unison." He urged forcibly all the

obvious reasons for calling a general synod, and scouted the idea of hesitating to take the right course, lest others should take the wrong one. He was "so impressed with the imperious necessity of having Liturgical uniformity, Clerical vestments, Synodical meetings, Diocesan visitations, &c., regulated beyond all risk of neglect or deviation," that—were he a bishop—he "would not rest till an Ecclesiastical Synod should be holden, for the purpose of canonically settling all these points of Church discipline." "It would never," he boldly added, "enter into my head to anticipate, much less to prejudice, the part my colleagues might take on such an occasion." This point he enforced at great length, well knowing that it was *the* point—the main obstacle, in his father's mind, to the desiderated synod. He urged his father, in almost so many words, to do his duty to the church, and leave the consequences to the church, and the church's divine Head. "The great Council of the Church relieved" him and every individual member "from all private responsibility."

Effect of this timely interposition.

There can be no doubt that Mr. John Skinner did both his father and the church a very great service by this timely and plain-spoken epistle. It was for the primus the very testimony, of which he stood in need, as to the true feeling of the church—testimony beyond all suspicion of unfriendliness to himself, or of unfaithfulness to the north. Undoubtedly the letter produced the desired effect, though not at once or

admittedly. That was not probably expected even by the writer. Anyhow, John had to content himself for the time with an ungracious and discouraging rejoinder, containing sundry significant hints (for his own behoof) as to the shortsightedness of "visionary reformers," and the danger of "zeal without prudence." But his counsel was taken to heart, and in no long time it was carried out to the utmost.

Primus agrees to summon Synod.

Just one year and a day after answering John, the primus wrote (Feb. 22nd, 1811) to Bishop Sandford, proposing the convocation of a general synod. In this letter he wrote, "It is surely time—now that we are tolerated, but without the smallest prospect of ever being more than tolerated—that we should turn our attention to the means which Providence has put in our power of making the best of our situation," &c. Bishop Sandford and the other bishops readily consented to the proposal, and thus, at last, the right course was discerned and taken, and, as will be seen, it was most faithfully carried out.

CHAPTER XVII.

1807-1811 *(Continued).*

Episcopal Fund, and Snell Exhibitions—Objects of Episcopal Fund—Primus objects to mode of distribution—Grants to "necessitous Clergy"—Recommends consultation with Bishops and Friendly Society—Recommendation adopted—Shows, by instances, value of local knowledge of cases—Oxford Snell Exhibitions—Exhibitions decline in value—Primus nominates Exhibitioners—Demand for Exhibitioners ceases—Result of experiment—Career of the Church Exhibitioners—Dr. Nicol—Mr. Jonathan Christie—Ex-Chaplain-General Gleig.

Episcopal Fund, and Snell Exhibitions.

BEFORE proceeding to give an account of the synod of 1811, the last great act of Primus Skinner's administration, it is well to notice certain matters of secondary interest which engaged his attention during the previous four years. From 1807 onwards he had a good deal of correspondence and consultation in regard to two subjects which, by a sort of accident, got mixed up together, viz., the distribution of grants from the episcopal fund, and the nomination of students for the Snell Exhibitions at Balliol College, Oxford.

The episcopal fund was essentially a lay scheme, and, it may be added, an Edinburgh one. As has

been seen, it was originated by zealous laymen of Sir William Forbes's family, and the collection of it was chiefly carried on by them as secretaries of a body of lay trustees, mostly resident in Edinburgh. They did their work with most exemplary zeal and assiduity, raising upwards of £12,000 in four or five years. Having collected the money, the trustees very naturally set to work to distribute it. Apparently, however, they did not at first ask for the advice of the bishops as to how the distribution should be made.

Objects of Episcopal Fund.

The primary object of the fund was to provide some small official income for the bishops—as much, at least, as would defray their expenses as bishops. With this was combined, probably as an afterthought, a secondary object, viz., to make small yearly grants to a few of "the more necessitous of the Clergy."

Primus objects to mode of distribution.

The way in which the trustees made their grants—especially those to the "necessitous" clergy—did not, by any means, meet the approbation of the primus. In regard to the grants to the bishops, there was no essential difference of opinion between them and him. What difference there was was creditable to his sense of justice and fair play. He would accept of no special grant for himself, though the trustees were anxious to make him one, on the ground of the expense of visiting his diocese, or some other pretext of that kind. He wanted all the bishops, as bishops,

to be "on an equal footing." The trustees wished the Bishop of Edinburgh to have a double portion (£100 instead of £50), "on account of his expensive situation." The primus approved of the increased allowance, but only for the then occupant of the Edinburgh see, and, for a reason, personal to him. "It is still my opinion, that the only exception from this general rule of equality lies with the *present* Bishop of Edinburgh [Dr. Sandford], not so much on account of his expensive situation, as because of the sacrifice which he has made of all hope of preferment in England, by accepting a seat in our proscribed College." (Letter to Mr. J. H. Forbes, Dec. 17th, 1808.) He himself would only accept the trifling addition of £10 to his episcopal allowance, "on condition of its being thereby secured to my successors in the character of Primus," "on account of his [the primus's] greater trouble and expense in the way of Ecclesiastical correspondence." (Ibid.)

Mr. Forbes (letter, October 15th, 1808), in intimating this announcement, doubtless expressed faithfully the sentiments of the trustees, when he said they "lamented" that they could not fully "reward" the primus's "long and faithful services, and uniform zeal in the cause of Episcopacy and genuine Christianity."

Grants to "necessitous Clergy."

On the subject of the grants to the diocesan clergy the primus differed more widely from the trustees, and, on the whole, with reason, as they themselves acknowledged. The trustees found that they could

make grants (of £15 each to some, £10 each to others) to twenty-two of "the more necessitous" of the clergy; and they appear to have proceeded to allocate these grants without much, or at least without regular, consultation with the local ecclesiastical authorities. Against this proceeding the primus protested. It is evident that if he could have had his own way he would have had the allocation of these inferior grants left, in each diocese, entirely at the disposal of the bishop—the person to whom the clergy would naturally look for help and encouragement, and whose hands would be beneficially strengthened by this additional patronage.

"The *primary* object of the Fund," he argued, "was a more suitable support of the Episcopal character in general, which would have naturally produced the accomplishment of the *secondary* purpose, by enabling the Bishops to relieve any pressing want, or reward any conspicuous merit among those of their Clergy thus left to depend upon them for relief or reward. . . . But this," he added, "is a plan for the maintenance of ecclesiastical order and discipline, which, I suspect, will be in a great measure defeated by the methods that are most likely to be recommended to the Trustees for their adoption in the distribution of the Episcopal Fund."

Recommends Consultation of Bishops and Friendly Society.

It need not be said that the primus never directly proposed such a "plan" to the trustees. But after the

distribution of grants, which was made in June, 1808, and appears to have been the first, he wrote to Mr. Mackenzie, urging that if the mode of distribution which had been adopted was continued, there would be a great risk of "abuse of the Charity," and recommending that "before making any future distributions," the trustees should communicate "with the Bishops, and also with the Friendly Society."

Recommendation adopted.

This recommendation was well received by Mr. Mackenzie at the time, and by the trustees when they met in September. The trustees not only approved of the suggestion, but also showed that they appreciated the reasons which chiefly moved the primus to make it. Their minute ran thus—"The Meeting fully entered into and approved the suggestion, conceiving it highly desirable to give any aid in their power to the influence and consideration which the Bishops ought to possess with the inferior Clergy. It was accordingly resolved, that at the proper period for making a further distribution, the Bishop's letter should be attended to." (Letter of Mr. Colin Mackenzie to Primus, 16th Sept., 1808.)

Examples showing the value of local knowledge.

In his letters to Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. J. H. Forbes, the primus gave instances from his own diocese to prove how much circumstances, known fully only to local authorities, alter cases. One clergyman had

but one compact congregation. His neighbour, with the same or even with a less income, had two charges, separated by nine, eleven, or even thirteen miles (as Monymusk and Meldrum), and, of course, in addition to much toil and travel, he required to "keep a pony." Then a clergyman was sometimes at once inefficient and intractable—needed help, and yet would not accept of help in any form in which help was offered to him.

Of the clergyman then at Old Deer the primus writes (Dec. 17, 1808), that he would not have mentioned him to the trustees had he not been "conscious of something about him of a worse and more incapacitating nature than any ordinary weakness either of body or mind. . . . He is possessed too," added the primus, "I am sorry to say, of a perverseness of temper which has hitherto resisted every proposal made to him, at my desire, by the humanity of the Brethren." To continue the grant to such a man, without some promise of amendment, would be, he argued, to encourage clerical perversity, and ruin a congregation. There can be no doubt that the primus, by this timely interposition, secured for the bishops the needful control over the allocation of the grants.

The Oxford Snell Exhibitions.

The other matter of interest which greatly occupied the primus's attention during these years, was an earnest attempt which was made to take advantage of the Snell exhibitions, at Balliol College, Oxford, to secure a superior education for promising candidates for the ministry.

The history of this attempt ought to be better known than it is, but to understand it it is necessary to glance at the history of the Snell trust—a history which is probably unique in its kind, as being so evidently a record of utter failure to carry out the intentions of the founder, obstacles of all kinds—political, ecclesiastical, social and economical—rising up one after the other and thwarting every attempt.* Of the founder of the Snell trust very little is known, but there can be no doubt that he was a Scotchman and an alumnus of Glasgow University. He had acquired an estate and domicile in England, was a zealous member of the Church of England, and wished to see the Church of Scotland provided with a race of clergy of the English type and training. This was undoubtedly the object of his trust. By his will, dated Dec., 1677, and republished by him in August, 1679, the year of his death, after making provision by annuities for his family, he devised the bulk of his estate to found, at Oxford, "in some Colledge or hall in that Universitie," ten scholarships tenable for ten, or at the most, for eleven years each, by young men, natives of Scotland, and nominated by the university of Glasgow, who should be bound, each under a penalty of £500, to enter into "Holy orders," and return to serve the church in Scotland. At that time, in Scotland as in England, "Holy orders" were by law episcopal orders. By an act passed in 1672, ministers ordained since 1661 otherwise than by

* For a full account of the history and object of the Snell Trust, see *Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal*, iv., p. 127. Also Lawson's "History," ii., 450, *seq.*

bishops were declared "to be no ministers." No other orders were recognised or legal, and no other orders can have been in the mind of the testator. His object undoubtedly was by a ten years' Oxford training to make a portion, at least, of the Scotch clergy, in learning and culture, equal to the best of the English clergy.

Revolution frustrates the object of the Trust.

The revolution of 1688 entirely frustrated this object. The will was not confirmed till 1693. The relatives endeavoured to set aside its provisions, and they were greatly encouraged in this attempt by the revolution of 1688. When the university of Oxford claimed the estate, Mr. Snell's daughter, Dorothy, and her husband, William Guise, pleaded "that in regard it was the Testator's intentions the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, should be propagated in the kingdom of Scotland . . . and that by reason of the circumstance of affairs now in that kingdom (Episcopacy and Prelacy being there abolished, and a Presbyterian Church government established), the said Testator's intentions are frustrated, and cannot be pursued." The attorney-general in reply did not dispute the premises but only the conclusion. Though the testator's intentions could not be strictly carried out, "yet the benefit of the Testator's pious and charitable designs and intentions ought not to be lost, but some other charity ought to be established for the benefit of the said University of Oxford and the schollars thereof, as near to the intentions of the said founder as can be."

The result of the action was a decree, in 1692, setting aside the claim of Mr. Snell's relatives, and another in 1693 "ordaining the Trustees of Mr. Snell to convey over his Estates to the six Senior Fellows of Balliol College, who were to administer the same 'for the benefit of the Testator's Exhibitioners.'"

The university of Glasgow was not represented in the suit, neither was the episcopal church of Scotland, which, being practically outlawed, was not then, nor for a hundred years to come, in a position to assert its legal claims. But the Glasgow professors acquiesced in the decree, and in fact, so far as the choice of exhibitioners was concerned, they had no cause to complain. The young men whom they sent up were apparently received without question as to their creed, and they were certainly left perfectly free as to their choice both of a profession and of a sphere of labour.

So far as appears, the Glasgow professors never found it necessary to appeal to the law except to secure a "better financial administration of the Charity." They intervened in this way in 1738, and the result was that, in 1744, "a decree was pronounced," requiring the master of Balliol and the other parties concerned "to give in to the Master of Chancery a scheme or schemes for the better regulation of the Charity." In the scheme which was given in by the vice-chancellor and three other heads of colleges, it was proposed "that every such scholar shall be obliged to submit and conform to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, and to enter into Holy orders when capable thereof by the Canons of the Church of England."

No decree was pronounced in the matter till 1759, and then, as might have been expected considering the state of matters in Scotland, no effect was given to the above scheme. Only "some questions as to the financial administration of the Charity" were disposed of. Other decrees, also confined to the regulation of financial matters, were pronounced at subsequent periods, but in other respects the administration continued as fixed in 1793.

Exhibitions decline in Value.

Notwithstanding all the regulations regarding the management of the finances, the causes of dissatisfaction, on this head, were never wholly removed. Occasionally the income of the property fell so low that the value of the exhibition was reduced to a sum which was far below what was necessary to maintain the exhibitioner.

Primus nominates Exhibitioners.

This was the case in 1807, when Primus Skinner had first an opportunity of nominating exhibitioners. It was, in fact, the low condition of the exhibitions that gave him the opportunity, as the sum of £60 to £70, in addition to the exhibition, was required to maintain the exhibitioner. Few Glasgow students could afford such a sum, and so Glasgow College ceased to present. The exhibitions went a-begging. Vice-Chancellor Parsons, then the master of Balliol, wrote to Bishop Sandford and Mr. Morehead of Edinburgh, urging

them to endeavour to send up some fitting young men. Bishop Sandford wrote to Primus Skinner, who very soon nominated two such candidates.

Messrs. Macfarlane and Nicol.

These two northern nominees were Mr. Macfarlane, a son of the Bishop of Ross and Argyll, and Mr. Alexander Nicol, from Monymusk. In his letter to Dr. Parsons introducing Mr. Nicol (Nov. 28, 1807), the primus says, "this is the first time that we of the Scotch Episcopal Church have had an opportunity of deriving any advantage from Mr. Snell's liberal endowment, with a view to the support of Episcopacy in this part of the kingdom."

How the exhibitions of these two gentlemen were supplemented to the requisite amount does not appear. There may have been arrears of the exhibitions, and church friends may have helped.

Fund to supplement Exhibitions.

It was clear, however, that if the exhibitions continued at that low value the church could not derive much benefit from them without the establishment of a fund for supplementing them. The need of such a fund was no sooner felt than it was supplied. The very next year (1808) Dr. Parsons, in writing to Mr. Colin Mackenzie, of Portmore, secretary of the episcopal fund trustees, and acknowledging, as vice-chancellor, a letter of thanks which the trustees had sent to the university, called attention to the then vacant

exhibitions. His letter is in several respects very interesting. After acknowledging the letter of thanks, he says—(Balliol College, July 22, 1808) "In writing to you on such a subject, Sir, I cannot refrain from informing you that there are now vacant two or three Exhibitions in this College which were originally founded for the purpose of assisting the education of young men, natives of Scotland, and intended for the service of the Scots Episcopal Church. The present value of these Exhibitions is £70 per an^{m}, subject to a deduction of £7 for property tax. I have good reason to hope that they will be augmented within a year or a year and a half." What was wanted was "a person or persons . . . who could afford to add £60 or £70 to the present amount of the Exhibition" on account of "these expensive times."

Mr. Mackenzie starts a Fund.

To this appeal the zealous Mr. Mackenzie made instant and favourable response. He wrote to Dr. Parsons (Venlaw, by Peebles, July 29, 1808), expressing his hopes "that the same friends of the Scots Episcopal Church [the trustees of the episcopal fund] who have taken the lead in the general measure for its benefit already known to you, will concur with me in regarding the opportunity temporarily afforded by your College of obtaining the best education for some young men destined for the priesthood in our Church, as a most important advantage, well worthy of some exertion on our parts. I mean to apply immediately to the Bishops of Aberdeen (the Primus) and of Edinburgh, who, I

hope, will be able to point out proper objects of recommendation, and I shall also, without delay, consult my Co-Trustees for our fund on the subject of raising, by separate contribution, a lesser annual fund for supplying the requisite advance beyond the amount arising from the Exhibitions."

Primus again nominates Exhibitioners.

Mr. Mackenzie wrote the primus on the same day (July 29, 1808), enclosing copies of Dr. Parson's letter to himself and of his own reply, and assuming that the primus would approve of the step, and also that he, himself, could raise the necessary funds, urged, as "the time was so short," that they should, "without delay, set on foot at once the search for proper Candidates." The primus was as prompt as the secretary. He appended, in his own handwriting, the following note to the copy of Mr. Mackenzie's letter to Dr. Parsons—"This packet acknowledged in a letter to Mr. Mackenzie of August 26, 1808, recommending two young men to the vacant Exhibitions—Jonathan Christie and Paul McColl—but only if his generous measure can be carried into effect without subjecting him to too much trouble on their accounts." Of these two, only Mr. Christie went up. He took with him a letter of introduction to Dr. Parsons (Sept. 8, 1808), in which it is stated that he was "born in the parish of Fyvie in the county of Aberdeen, and son to an Episcopal Clergyman of this diocese"*—"a young man of excellent

* Son of the Rev. Alexander Christie, Woodhead, Fyvie, who died in 1827. He was made Dean of Aberdeen a short time before he died.

disposition." The primus added—"our other two young men, Messrs. Macfarlane and Nicol, express themselves in terms of the most lively gratitude for the attention you have already shown them, &c. . . . If the other vacant Exhibition be not soon disposed of, we shall endeavour to find a person duly qualified for" it also.

Demand for Exhibitioners ceases.

No doubt Primus Skinner could have supplied Balliol College with abundance of eligible exhibitioners from his own diocese alone. But very soon the demand for them ceased. The very next year (1809) the value of the exhibitions was raised, by a new lease of the estates, from £70 to £133 6s. 8d., or, deducting "property tax," about £120. The exhibition could now maintain the exhibitioner, and Glasgow University had no difficulty in filling up the vacancies as fast as they arose.

Probably Mr. Mackenzie and the other zealous trustees of the supplementary fund regarded the half exhibition as "greater than the whole," or at least better for the church; and they would gladly have gone on sending up exhibitioners, and paying half their expenses, looking for their reward in a learned and cultured native ministry. Most probably, however, they would have looked in vain.

Result of Experiment.

The experiment, so far as it was carried out, was a complete failure. It benefited churchmen, but not

the church. So far as appears, not one of these church exhibitioners ever came back to serve the church. They could not resist the tempting career which England offered to talent and scholarship. Almost every one of them rose to distinction in some way.

Dr. Alexander Nicol.

By 1822 Alexander Nicol, the Monymusk villager's son, had become known as the first Oriental scholar in England, able "to speak his way to the Wall of China," and, to his own great astonishment, he was made Professor of Hebrew, and Canon of Christ's Church—a position, the emoluments of which, probably, exceeded the sum of the income of all the bishops of his native church, and that of all the salaries of the whole of the clergy of his native diocese.

Mr. Jonathan Christie.

Jonathan Christie, the other Aberdeen exhibitioner, was, in a worldly sense, yet more successful. He took to English law, in preference to Scotch theology, and became the first conveyancer in London, dying only a few years ago, a man of wealth and position. . . .

G. R. Gleig, Ex-Chaplain General.

George Robert Gleig, who still happily lives, a hale nonagenarian, has, as soldier, man of letters, parish priest, and finally Chaplain-General of the Forces, run

the most varied and distinguished career of the whole.*

The exhibitioners certainly effectually helped themselves. Instead, however, of helping the native church, they weakened it. Every talented youth sent to Oxford was an able labourer withdrawn from the native vineyard; and had the process been continued long enough it would have amounted to an intellectual pauperising of the little church, the cream of its ecclesiastical talent being continually skimmed off. It may be doubted if the experiment would have been much more satisfactory even had the church—in terms of the will—had the power to recall or fine its reluctant sons. Nay, it is problematical—the circumstances of the two churches and countries being so different—whether the little Scotch church would have ever derived much real benefit from the foundation, though the exhibitions

* Mr. Gleig can scarcely be claimed as a regular church nominee. No doubt it had been intended that he should go up in that character, but before he proceeded to Oxford (in 1811), the exhibitions had been doubled in value, and Glasgow University resumed its right of nomination. In Mr. Gleig's case, however, the changed circumstances made no difference, as he was a distinguished Glasgow student, and was equally favoured by his church and his university.

The writer has a letter from Mr. Gleig (Bylands, Winchester, 12th October, 1886), in which he says, "The Snell exhibitions were, in my day, in the nomination of the Glasgow University. . . . They had been raised . . . to £120 a year. . . . But I doubt whether they sufficed to cover all the expenses of Oxford life. At all events I know, that, in my own case, they failed to achieve that end." It is now seventy-six years since Mr. Gleig went up to Oxford, and yet there is every indication that he is still "hale and hearty!" His handwriting is more firm and legible than it was ten years ago; and the *Broad Arrow* has just intimated (April, 1887) that he is "living, hale and hearty, at Micheldeven, Hants. He was appointed to preach in St. Paul's a week ago." Certainly "years should speak" from the pulpit, when they can.

had been assigned to it, and placed under its own complete control from the first. But this was not the opinion of one of those zealous episcopal fund trustees who co-operated with Bishop Skinner in carrying out the experiment of 1807-8. In the year 1845, Lord Medwyn—the John Hay Forbes of 1808—raised an action in the Court of Chancery for the purpose of "having it found and declared that the trustees were bound to administer the charity, with regard to the primary object of the testator, and that the scholars upon the foundation should be bound to fulfil the testator's intentions, by returning to Scotland, there to hold preferment in the episcopal church of that country." The action was successful in the first instance. Vice-Chancellor Knight Bruce gave "an elaborate and careful" decision entirely favourable—concluding that Mr. Snell was "an Episcopalian Protestant, and as having, by the expression 'Holy Orders,' meant Holy Orders by Episcopal ordination."

The Vice-Chancellor's decree was reversed, however, on appeal to the House of Lords, and the zealous Lord Medwyn, besides bestowing much time on the action, paid £1700 of the expenses out of his own pocket.*

* For a full account of the foundation and the history of the Snell Exhibition, see *Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal*, vol. iv., p. 127. Lawson's "History," ii., p. 450.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1811.

Delay in summoning General Synod—Former General Synods—Need of change in Constitution of General Synod—Must have some claim to title of General—Powers of the Presbyter-Members—What was proposed beforehand—The Synod summoned to meet—Meets—Primus offers to resign his office—His opening address—Bishops the only constituent members of the Synod—Presbyters might "reason and debate"—Only one Chamber for all Members—and one order of voters—Presbyters retire to choose Prolocutor—Canon V. establishes a Second Chamber—The great reform of 1811—The position of the Scotch office—Primacy—All Northern views and usages respected—Liberty to adapt occasional offices—Cautious recommendation of the Surplice—Clergy and people averse to Surplice—Recommendation turned into an injunction—How the clergy carried out the injunction—Anecdotes of Dean Shand and Mr. Robertson, Meldrum—The success of the Synod greatly due to Primus.

AS has been seen (Chap. XVII.), Primus Skinner took some time to make up his mind to summon a general synod. In the circumstances, however, the delay could not be called long, and it was probably, on the whole, beneficial rather than prejudicial to the interests of the church. It gave time to all parties to ponder the changes that were called for by the changed circumstances of the church.

Previous General Synods.

A general synod of any description was a new thing to the men of that generation. A real general synod was a new thing to the church. The last so-called general synod had met the year before the primus was born, and it differed in no essential particular from an ordinary episcopal synod. Its only "constituent members" were the bishops. The deans had indeed seats in it, but they had no votes. They could advise, but their advice might be entirely disregarded. Apparently the bishops had come, not unnaturally, to regard the presence of the deans as of no essential importance. In 1792, and in 1809, the episcopal synod had met and passed important resolutions that affected the whole church, and were known and treated as "canons."

Need of Change in Constitution of the Synod.

All parties who reflected on the matter must have seen that the time had come for a change not only in the canons, but also in the instrument for canon-making—the synod itself. A general synod in 1811 could not, in constitution, be altogether as the general synod of 1743.

Synod must have some claim to the title General.

If the synod did not contain representatives of all orders and degrees of men in the church, it was felt that it ought, at least, to contain representatives of

all orders and degrees of the clergy, and not merely as hitherto only the dignitaries, viz., the bishops and the deans. The bishops saw the necessity of some change in this direction, and in arranging for the meeting of the synod, they made some provision for securing a representation of the ordinary diocesan clergy.

In what numbers the Clergy should be admitted.

The only question with the bishops was whether the clergy should be admitted, as at the Laurencekirk meetings, in a body, or only "by delegation" or representation. The latter plan was adopted. It is the only plan in a large church, but in a church with sixty or seventy clergy, it was probably a mistake. The Laurencekirk conventions and convocation were very successful meetings, and the representative church councils of the present day, which usually have five times as large an attendance as the largest convention had, are also successful. The numbers are not found to be appreciably obstructive of business, and they have obvious advantages. A council, containing a clergyman and a layman from every congregation, and discussing church matters for two days every year, and each year in a different locality from the last, cannot but have a powerful effect in educating and stimulating all orders and degrees of churchmen.

Powers of the Presbyter-Members.

The great question in 1811, however, was not in what numbers the presbyters should be admitted,

but with what powers — whether, like the deans, in past times, as mere advisers, or as constituent members — entitled to vote as well as speak. The right to vote was the only real and solid concession. It seems clear, however, that with the exception of Dr. Gleig, the bishops had not, at the time of calling the meeting, any thought of making this concession to the presbyters. And there was no intention of having a second chamber.

The original proposals.

The only change in the constitution of the synod contemplated by the bishops, was the admission of another presbyter-adviser from each diocese. The synod was intended to consist of six "constituent members," and twelve assessors, all sitting, and "discussing and debating" in one chamber. This is clear from the testimony of the two leading bishops—the primus and Bishop Gleig—and especially from the opening address of the former. It will be seen, however, that there was a ready acquiescence on the part of all the bishops in the more liberal provision, as soon as it was proposed. In fact, the synod was conducted throughout in a brotherly and tolerant spirit that was most creditable to the members of both orders.

The Synod summoned to meet.

When all the preliminaries were agreed upon by the episcopal synod, the primus proceeded to carry them out with his usual promptitude and energy. He

issued, on March 29, 1811, a summons to his dean—Mr. Sangster, Lonmay—directing him to call a meeting of the clergy of the diocese, "as soon as it can conveniently be holden after Easter, for the purpose of electing an additional delegate, who, with yourself as dean, may duly attend and represent the said clergy in the 'General Ecclesiastical Synod.'" The object of the synod was to supply the church with "a proper system of canonical regulations suited to its present situation." The synod was to be "holden in the city of Aberdeen on Wednesday the 19th day of June," 1811.

Meeting of the Synod.

It duly met there on the day appointed, and was attended by all the six bishops, but only by four of the deans, and by the same number of the representatives of the clergy; two of the latter were English dignitaries—Prebendaries Alison, Edinburgh, and Horsley, Dundee.

The Primus offers to Resign his Office.

The primus took the chair *ex-officio*, but, after prayer for the divine blessing on "the work" which the synod had met to accomplish, he offered to resign the office of primus. This he did, on the ground that there was "only one member of the Scottish Episcopate then alive (Bishop Macfarlane) who had a vote in electing" him to that office. The bishops, "with one voice, assured" him that "they cordially approved of him as the primus of their venerable college," and they "had no wish or desire to place any other member of

that body in the office which he had long filled so honourably to himself and so usefully to the church at large." The primus then constituted the synod, declaring it, "in the name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity," to be "a regular National Synod of the Episcopal Church in Scotland."

The Primus's Opening Address.

Then, after verification of the commissions of the deans and delegates, the primus delivered an opening address to these "Presbyters of the Church," commencing as follows:—

The Bishops the Constituent Members of the Synod.

"My Reverend Brethren, you are, I trust, well aware that the Bishops, being the proper administrators of the discipline of the Church, are to be considered as the Constituent Members of every Ecclesiastical Synod."

Presbyters might "Reason and Debate."

"The Deans and those other Presbyters . . . are to have the privilege assigned to them by former Canons, and by the practice of this Church—that is, they are to be allowed to *reason and debate*, to propose and give their opinions freely, on all those matters of discipline and canonical regulation now to come under our consideration, though *not to give any such decisive voice as Bishops only have a right to pronounce.*" Further, if they (the Presbyters) "should feel any desire to agitate

any question" by themselves, "I have to inform you," added the primus, "that another apartment is already allotted for this purpose, to which you are at liberty to retire, as often as you may judge proper;" and, if they wished to have "a chairman or prolocutor" to deliver to the bishops "the result of their deliberations," they had only to make choice of one of their number to act in that capacity." The primus then intimated that he had drawn out a preamble to the proposed canons, "pointing out the original Constitution of the Christian Church," and that preamble he read to the synod.

Only one Chamber and one Order of Voters.

It is clear, from this address, that the primus had as yet no thought of according the right of voting to the presbyters, or even of having in the synod two separate chambers, the consent of both of which should be necessary for the passing of any canon. It may be said of this, as of other important questions that came before the synod, that they were solved "*ambulando*." The proper method of settlement became evident to the members in the course of the proceedings.

Presbyters retire and choose Prolocutor.

After the reading of the preamble, the presbyters immediately acted on the permission to retire to their separate apartment, and there they chose the Very Rev. James (afterwards Bishop) Walker, of Edinburgh, to be their prolocutor, and instructed him to "state to

the Chamber of Bishops that they did unanimously approve" of the preamble. In the same way they retired to discuss every canon that was proposed, and "having passed their judgment upon the language, as well as on the subject matter of it, instructed their Prolocutor to state their sentiments to the Chamber of Bishops."

A Second Chamber decreed.

Thus a second chamber was naturally evolved in the course of the proceedings. The bishops felt and acknowledged the great services the presbyters had rendered to the synod, and hence there was only a momentary hesitation on the part of one of their number (doubtless Bishop Jolly), in agreeing to the provisions of canon v., which was moved by Bishop Gleig, and enacted that the dean and delegates should be constituent members of every general synod, and form a second chamber—the bishops constituting the first—and that no law or canon should "be enacted or abrogated but by the consent and with the approbation of both Chambers."

The Great Reform of 1811.

The establishment of a regular second chamber was the great canonical reform of 1811. Had it been accompanied by a provision for securing the regular periodical meeting of the general synod it could hardly have failed to stimulate greatly the life and progress of the church, counteracting the general tendency to

stagnation and somnolence which prevailed for the next quarter of a century. But the calling of a general synod was left at the option of the bishops, and the majority of these for the most part shrank from the responsibility. There are always very plausible reasons for not convening a deliberative assembly at any particular time, and elderly men generally dislike movement and change of any sort.

The position of the Scotch Office—primary.

No doubt in the eyes of northern churchmen generally a more important canon than canon V. of the code of 1811, was canon XV., which settled for the time the position of the Scotch office. Everything connected with this canon—its chief provisions, and the manner in which and the men by whom they were framed—furnished to the primus the most convincing proofs of the groundlessness of the apprehensions which he had entertained of southern hostility to the northern office. This canon was drawn up by two clergymen from the south, two English dignitaries, Prebendaries Alison and Horsley; and it secured to the Scotch office as high a position as its best friends could desire for it, higher probably than it was wise to claim, certainly higher than it has been able to maintain. Most churchmen would probably now be satisfied to see the two offices placed on a footing of equality. The canon put the Scotch above the English, making it the primary or authorised office, while the English held only the position of a tolerated or conditionally permitted office.

All Northern Views and Usages respected.

This provision was entirely satisfactory to the primus and his northern friends, and the same may be said of every other canonical provision of the code that bore upon northern practices or Scotch scruples. Everything of this sort was dealt with very tenderly, and change was recommended rather than enjoined.

Liberty to adapt Occasional Offices.

This feature of the code is very marked in those canons (XIX., XXII., and XXIII.) which regulate the use of the occasional offices. It is hardly too much to say that every clergyman had, in the case of each rite, full permission to make a "Scotch office" for himself, for he might adapt the English office almost at will, being only forbidden to omit anything that was "essential to the validity of the rite."

Cautious recommendation of the Surplice.

In the matter of the "decent dress" of the English clergy, the surplice, notwithstanding the influential advocacy of such well known northern brethren as Bishop Gleig and Mr. John Skinner, Forfar, the synod confined itself to a very cautious, argumentative recommendation of this vestment, inserted, not in the body of the canons, but in the appendix. "Whereas," it was said, "it was represented to the Synod . . . that different dresses have, of late, been worn by the Clergy officiating in the Church; and whereas more impor-

tance seems to have been attached to the colour of the clerical vestments than can properly be ascribed to any colour, it is hereby declared that it is not essential to the purity of public worship whether the clergyman, when reading prayers, be arrayed in a white robe, or in a black," yet "custom and precedent" favoured "the white garment." It was "the proper sacerdotal vestment of the Jewish priesthood, and likewise of the Christian priesthood, through the Universal Church, for at least fourteen hundred years;" that also "of the United Church of England and Ireland." Further, it seemed "a much more proper dress for the Ministers of the Prince of peace and purity than black." For these reasons the synod recommended the introduction of the surplice, yet "with prudence and discretion."

The Clergy and people alike averse to the Surplice.

The need of "prudence and discretion" was well known to the northern members of the synod. Neither clergy nor laity were, as yet, prepared for the introduction of the surplice, and the recommendation remained all but a dead letter in the diocese of Aberdeen for twelve years to come.

The Recommendation turned into an Injunction.

The recommendation would doubtless have been disregarded much longer had not the bishop interposed his authority, and turned the recommendation into an injunction. At the Aberdeen diocesan synod of 1823 (August 20), Bishop William Skinner, who had just returned from his triennial visitation of the diocese,

stated in his charge that he had seen "with sensible regret" the general neglect of the recommendation, and "signified his earnest wish that a general uniformity should prevail, and that the surplice should be generally adopted in every congregation under his charge, on or before the Festival of Christmas next, and from that time forward be regularly used in publicly reading prayers or administering the sacraments."

How the Clergy carried out the Injunction.

This was a specific requirement of authority, which the clergy of those days would never have dreamt of resisting. They all complied, but not all with good will, or, in some cases, without a very manifest internal struggle. So far as can be judged from diocesan traditions, some of the clergy, and those not the youngest, were overpowered by a feeling of shyness and a nervous horror of the effect which the sight of them in the white robe would produce on the unaccustomed eyes of northern churchmen. Mr. Leslie, of Buckie, has given a graphic account of the grievous mental agitation which was experienced by his respected predecessor, Mr. Shand, a clergyman of nearly forty years' standing, and soon about to be made dean of the diocese.* But the sufferings of

* "Dean Shand was very much prejudiced against surplices, and used stoutly to declare that he would never wear one. But alas! for human consistency, even the Dean had to comply with the spirit of the age, and to wear the hated garment. The first Sunday he wore it he is said to have hung down his head, as, ill at ease, he rapidly strode along the passage of the Church, pulling the surplice tightly round him."—*Scottish Guardian*, July 23, 1886.

Mr. Robertson, of Oldmeldrum, a very shy and retiring man, must, from authentic accounts, have been, if not greater, at least much more protracted. Mr. Robertson's church had no vestry. He therefore put on his robes in his house, which stood (and stands) on the other side of the public road, and thus arrayed he walked to church across the road and through the assembling worshippers and passing strangers. To him this was for sometime an ordeal, like running the gauntlet or walking the plank. An old member of his congregation told the writer thirty years ago that on these occasions it seemed to her as if Mr. Robertson would "sink through the earth."

Primus Skinner seems to have done nothing during his administration to forward the introduction of the surplice, and indeed it seems doubtful if he himself ever regularly wore it "in the reading of the prayers, &c." He doubtless trusted to the effect of time in dispelling prejudice, and contemplated a gradual rather than a simultaneous adoption of the vestment.

How much the success of the Synod was due to the Primus.

The primus, as his son John assures us, was highly gratified with the success of the synod. He might well be so; for the code of canons produced, meagre and imperfect as it may now seem, was, on the whole, very satisfactory for the age, and a worthy crown and completion of his own life-long labours for church emancipation, re-union and reform. The happy result was, in no small degree, due to his own excellent

management. Both before and during the sitting of the synod he did everything that business energy and goodwill could accomplish, both for the effective dispatch of business and for the comfort and convenience of the members; and he presided over the deliberations with unfailing dignity, courtesy and impartiality. With the usual hospitality of his family, he appears to have entertained, at his own house, the whole of the members of both chambers on both days of the sitting. The brethren from the south had not anticipated treatment of this sort either in the synod or out of it, and one of the most respected of them, to his great credit, plainly said so. "Your father's conduct" at the synod, wrote the Rev. James (afterwards Bishop) Walker, of Edinburgh, to the primus's son, John, when the latter was about to publish his "Annals," "made a deep impression on those Clergy who previously knew him very partially, and only by hearsay. His kind and easy hospitality as our Landlord, the ability and accuracy with which he prepared the matter of our deliberations, his impartial conduct as President of our Assembly, and the readiness with which he yielded those points which we from the South thought most necessary for general conciliation, stand strongly in my recollection, and are certainly worthy of special consideration in the estimate of your father's character." (Annals of Scottish Episcopacy, p. 485.)

CHAPTER XIX.

1811-1814.

Provisional character of the new Code of Canons; Church, the Church of a district—A Satellite of the English Church—Church finance—John Bowdler and Colin Mackenzie—A happy introduction—The Right Hon. George Rose—A fertile suggestion—the "Bishops' Rents"—*Regium Donum*—Memorial to the Treasury—Biennial Grant of £1200—Primus claims for Bishops a voice in allocation of Grants—His personal liberality and disinterestedness—Proposes to devote all the Bishops' shares to some Church purpose—Instance of his strict honour and integrity—Raising of clerical incomes—Improvement of Church buildings—Mr. Bowdler as builder and repairer of Churches—Insists on "plainness"—Issues a circular of seven queries—Grant of £50 to new Church at Ellon—Larger Grant to Stonehaven—Grant to repair Monymusk Chapel.

PRIMUS SKINNER had good reason to be satisfied with the canons of 1811. It was not for him to trouble himself with thoughts of the necessarily temporary and provisional nature of the code. From the circumstances of the church, those canons could not serve their purpose very long, unless there was an almost entire cessation of progress: for the church was at that time not only in a transition state, but it was in reality little more than the church of a district—that of the north-east.

In the south and in the west it had little footing, except in the city of Edinburgh; and, in the synod

of 1811, even Edinburgh could hardly be said to be represented by Edinburgh men. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that, with the exception of three English clergymen, the Aberdeen synod was a council of Aberdeen men. Aberdeen dominated the church. This was not a state of things that could continue if the church should grow and lengthen its cords to the south and the west. If the south revived it would not be led by the north. It would be led by England—as, indeed, the north had been—but it would follow the lead—not of the (now extinct) non-juring church of England, but that of the existing established church.

The little Northern Church a Satellite of the Southern.

In fact, from the time that political obstacles were removed, it was inevitable that the little northern church, so long at least as it continued little, should become more and more a satellite of the great southern church. From the mere force of moral gravitation it must conform its movements more and more to those of its powerful neighbour. Though nominally free, it must be practically dependent.

This tendency not yet realised.

It was hardly to be expected, however, that the synod of 1811 should fully realise this inevitable tendency of things, and look into the far future. It was enough for them to accomplish a workable compromise for the present. Certainly this much was

sufficient for the venerable president. His career was now nearing its close. There remained to him only five more years of life, and these offered but little opportunity for testing the merits of the new code.

Church Finance.

The church was now wholly at peace, and it was very much disposed to rest. It was less bent on law-making than on money-raising, and, in this needful work, the aged primus, in spite of failing health and administrative troubles, took an effective part. The London and Edinburgh friends of the church were, however, the leading agents in this movement, and, with their help, more was done for church finance in those five years than in the next five-and-twenty.

John Bowdler and Colin Mackenzie.

Mr. John Bowdler of Hayes, Kent (afterwards of Eltham, eight miles nearer London), had now taken the place of Mr. William Stevens, and acted as the treasurer and dispenser of the liberal gifts of the English friends of the church. In this capacity he proved himself very zealous and efficient—ever active, watchful, and business-like. He corresponded very frequently with the primus, and was dissatisfied if he did not receive a letter from Aberdeen every two or three months. Mr. Bowdler had an ever zealous Scotch correspondent and co-operator in Mr. Colin Mackenzie of Portmore, the originator of the episcopal fund. Mr. Bowdler worked zealously for this fund; and, after a time, he, by a well-directed appeal, made

it the stepping-stone to another fund of equal amount, from which the church for nearly forty years derived effective help.

A happy Introduction—the Right Hon. George Rose.

On January 11th, 1813, he wrote the primus to say that he had not written him for some time because he had had nothing to say. "Now," he added, "I *have* . . . one day, *accidentally* a neighbour introduced me to the Right Hon. George Rose: we bowed and parted without once speaking." *

A Fertile Suggestion—the "Bishops' Rents."

This introduction did not seem promising; but, on the strength of it, "it came into my head," says Mr. Bowdler, to write to Mr. Rose, reminding him that he had given one subscription to the episcopal fund and

* The Right Hon. George Rose belonged to a well-known old Scottish family—Rose of Kilravock—which has given several distinguished ecclesiastics not only to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, but also to the English Church. "Archbishop Arthur Ross of St. Andrews—Bishop Alexander Rose of Edinburgh—the Right Hon. George Rose was grandfather of the late Lord Strathnairn, and son of David Rose, 'priest of the Scots Church,' officiating at Lochlee and other places. He (David Rose) was ordained deacon and priest by Bishop Gadderar, and served the Church faithfully during the long period of persecution" (Letter to Writer from Dr. Grub, June 10th, 1887). Of the same family were the able and excellent, though short-lived, Rev. Hugh James Rose, editor of the *British Magazine*, author of a work on German protestantism, and a great power for good in the English Church fifty years ago, and his like-minded brother, the Rev. Henry John Rose. The Rev. David Rose of Lochlee was probably a son of the Rev. Alexander Rose of Cairnie, who was "deprived for reading the Pretender's Proclamation:" he and Mrs. Rose are buried within the parish church of Lethnot.

promised another, and suggesting the possibility of his obtaining for the Scotch episcopal clergy "a most meritorious set of men," some annual grant from the treasury—such as, perhaps, "the ancient Revenues of the Bishops, said to be yet unappropriated and neglected." By return of post Mr. Bowdler had an answer from Mr. Rose, thanking him "most heartily for bringing this interesting matter to his recollection," and promising to "use his utmost endeavours to be useful" in the way that had been suggested. He had written, he said, by that post, "for information respecting the Bishops' Rents.' This was an auspicious commencement, but Mr. Rose soon learnt, from his Scotch friends, that it would be very unwise to propose the restoration of the bishops' rents, or of any other survival of the old established times.

The Regium Donum.

A *regium donum*, or grant from the treasury, like that annually made to the Irish presbyterians, might be asked without exciting jealousy or suspicion. Mr. Rose agreed that this was what should be asked for, and, further, that the Scotch bishops were the proper persons to ask for it. He wrote to this effect to Mr. Bowdler, and also to Mr. Colin Mackenzie, who both communicated instantly with the primus. Mr. Mackenzie, in his letter (Sept. 8th, 1813), gave at full length the letter of Mr. Rose to him. Mr. Rose thought he had "made a favourable beginning in the matter of the Scotch Episcopal Clergy;" further, that Mr. Vansittart agreed with him that "an appli-

cation should be made to the Treasury by the Bishops," and, he added, "I should like to see a draft of the Memorial."

Primus prepares Memorial.

It is needless to say that the primus, after consultation with his colleagues, speedily prepared a memorial to the treasury, and this was forwarded to Mr. Rose, who approved of it, merely proposing, as the primus wrote to Mr. Colin Mackenzie (Oct. 23, 1813), "a small addition on a separate bit of paper to excite more strongly the humanity of his friends in the Ministry on our behalf."

Biennial Grant of £1200.

Backed by the powerful influence of Mr. Rose and Mr. Vansittart, the application was successful. A grant of £1200 was made and very shortly paid, and it continued, with occasional breaks, to be paid every second year for nearly forty years. It was equivalent to an annual grant of £600 a year—something more than the interest of the episcopal fund.

The Primus claims for the Bishops a voice in the distribution.

As he had done in the case of the episcopal fund, the primus was careful to impress upon Mr. Colin Mackenzie the propriety of safeguarding the authority of the bishops in the arrangements for the distribution of the government money amongst the presbyters.

As that authority had "no legal sanction to give effect to it," there was "the more necessity for guarding against any encroaching from that spirit of insubordination, which is but too apt to be excited and encouraged by a feeling of independence as to worldly support" (Letter of primus, Oct. 23rd, 1813).

His personal liberality and disinterestedness.

The primus, no doubt, held high views of the authority of the bishop in "a true primitive Episcopacy." But he was unquestionably sincere when he said—as he proceeded to do in effect—that it was from no personal object, but from an earnest desire to promote the church's welfare, that he ventured to make this recommendation. He certainly was not on this, or on any like occasion, actuated by sordid views of a worldly nature. On the contrary, he gave the most conclusive and exemplary proofs of personal disinterestedness and public spirit.

The Primus proposes to devote all the Bishops' Shares of Regium Donum to some Church Purpose.

When, in 1814, the *regium donum* was for the first time paid to the bishops, the primus wrote to Bishop Jolly, as he probably did to his other colleagues, proposing that the bishops should all unite in devoting their respective shares of the grant to some general church purpose. The proposal "came too late" for good Bishop Jolly, who, as appears from the autograph copy of his answer to the primus, had already gifted

away one half of the grant, and promised, or in other ways "destined," great part of the other half, so that there was left for himself "personally little more, if not less, than a tenth of the whole." * The other bishops had doubtless similar excuses; and, indeed, considering the generally very straitened means of the bishops, this was a rather too heroic "self-denying ordinance" to find ready acceptance.

Instance of the Primus's strict Honour and Integrity.

The primus was more successful about this time in persuading a colleague of a different class to unite with him in making a much greater personal sacrifice. He and Baillie Walker, a member of his Aberdeen congregation, had lent £1500 of trust money on inadequate security. The money was lost, but there was no call upon the trustees to refund it. The baillie strongly objected to refund, but the bishop insisted upon it, and not only paid his own half, but persuaded the baillie also to pay his half. †

The Improvement of Church Finance.

Primus Skinner rejoiced greatly in these successful financial schemes which culminated with the *regium donum*. They were the natural and fitting sequel to

* Life of Bishop Jolly, pp. 81-82.

† The writer, many years ago, had all the particulars of this case from one who had heard them frequently from aged relatives, citizens of Aberdeen, who knew all the facts and all the parties concerned, viz., the late Rev. George Walker of Banff (formerly of Belford), a good man and a generous church benefactor—founder of the Walker Clergy Trust (Aberdeen diocese).

the ecclesiastical and political improvements which had been the work of his life, and they brought the church's finances into line with its other machinery.

The raising of the Salaries of the Clergy.

The yearly sum that might now be counted upon for eking out the salaries of the bishops and the poorer incumbents, was about £1200—no great sum, certainly—less indeed than the salary of many an English rector, and hardly a tenth of the clergy fund of the present day. But for that "day of small things" it was a great sum. The ten or fifteen pounds which it added to the salary of the ordinary country pastor, was probably more appreciated then than the £60 of equal dividend is now; and £50 or £75 formed a large fraction of the income of a Scottish bishop in those days. It must be remembered also, that in addition to these direct aids to stipend, the clergy now enjoyed the very important indirect aid derived from the very successful Friendly Society, which made provision for their widows and orphans.

Improvement of Church Buildings.

Something had at last been done for the clergy. It was now the turn of the churches. Little or nothing had been done for them by the church as a body, or by any church society, and it is needless to say that the buildings were of a very plain and humble description. As churches, indeed, few of them could be called old—only a very few, such as Luthermuir, dated beyond the relief act of '92—but many of those

of the poorer congregations were of very imperfect construction. Some were adapted from old secular buildings, and the great majority of them doubtless stood more or less in need of alteration and repair.

Mr. Bowdler as builder and repairer of Churches.

Timely help was now supplied in every case of need. There was a breathing space from other claims, and the zealous Mr. Bowdler turned it to account. He took up the claims of the churches with as much zeal as he had done those of the clergy ; and he found apparently pretty abundant means wherewith to satisfy them. A lady, who did not wish her name to be known,* appears to have supplied him with the greater part of the funds which he required. He proved a most conscientious and painstaking distributor of them, sparing no trouble or correspondence to find out where help was really required, and allocating his grants fairly amongst all the six dioceses. He made his object very plain, viz., the "putting old chapels into *decent repair*, and building *plain* new ones where wanted."

His reasons for insisting on "plainness."

He was very particular about *plainness;* not from love of plainness, for "no man could be more desirous"

* "I GREATLY LAMENT that my good friend, Miss R., has mentioned the lady's name. For strong reasons she wishes her name to be concealed ; and it is probable that if it gets wind, it will defeat a plan which now promises great benefit to your Church."—Mr. Bowdler to Primus Skinner, October 8, 1814.

to see "all places of worship not only decent, but decorous, and venerable, and beautiful," but partly from economy, and partly "not to offend the Establishment, who are now becoming jealous of our efforts, and talk of the revival of Episcopacy." *

Open Sittings.

One of his suggestions for securing economy was "open sittings." He was "fond of them" on higher grounds; but, in Scotland, they would be desirable, if only because they would supply more available room at the same expense. They "would always be filled where there were people to fill them;" whereas pews were often "half empty," while some worshippers were left unaccommodated.

Issues a Circular of seven queries.

Mr. Bowdler soon found that he had undertaken a hard task. As early as September 8, 1814, he wrote to the primus, "This business of the Episcopal Chapels is too heavy for me, and it is greatly increased by the imperfect accounts I receive." With the view of eliciting more trustworthy accounts, Mr. Bowdler issued, on July 10th, 1815, to each of the Scotch bishops, a series of queries—seven in number—calculated, if duly answered, to elicit the true state and condition of every chapel in all the six dioceses. The answers were probably as he said, in most cases,

* Letter to Primus Skinner, September 12, 1815.

"imperfect enough," but they were found serviceable. In most cases Mr. Bowdler, so far as can be judged from his letter, gave to each bishop all the help that he asked for, in every case of real need.

New Church at Ellon.

The primus took great interest in the erection of a chapel at Ellon, to unite his own former congregations of Chapelhall and Bernie; and he carried it out, notwithstanding, it is said, the great dissatisfaction of many members of the two flocks to whom the new place of meeting was very inconvenient. The primus had much correspondence with Mr. Bowdler on the subject; and, as early as January, 1815, had assured him that the new church would go on, if he would subscribe £50 to it. Mr. Bowdler agreed to grant this sum, in a letter of January 18, 1815. In a postscript to a subsequent letter, he tells the primus that Mr. Colin Mackenzie will pay him the £50, and he offers to give £20 more "if they would fit up the" new Ellon church with open sittings, "even allowing a gallery, or pews for the gentry." This was at least granting all that was asked.

Larger Grant to Stonehaven.

At this time, however, a new church was being built at Stonehaven for the united qualified and native congregations there. Bishop Gleig had asked and obtained a larger sum for Stonehaven, than Bishop Skinner had asked and obtained for Ellon. When this

fact became known to the primus, he fancied that Mr. Bowdler had shown undue preference to Stonehaven and Bishop Gleig; and, on March 21st, 1816, he wrote to Mr. Bowdler on the subject, in a way that "surprised and mortified him." Mr. Bowdler had a conclusive answer—"I gave you the sum you desired for Ellon, and I gave Bishop Gleig the sum he desired for Stonehaven. If in this I did wrong, I can only lament it."

Grant to Monymusk Chapel.

In this letter of Mr. Bowdler's (Eltham, March 28, 1816), there is another instance of his giving all that was asked although that amounted to the whole sum required for the repairs desiderated, and still further an instance of the very careful way in which he scrutinised every claim that was brought before him. He had, in his last letter to Aberdeen, asked the primus if he had any other chapels in need of repair. The primus answered that "the Chapel of Monymusk is standing in need of repair to the extent perhaps of about £20." Hereupon Mr. Bowdler turned to the late returns to his queries ("your account of your Chapels in September last"), where he found "Monymusk—the Chapel is just now in very good repair." Here was a serious discrepancy, which called for explanation. The primus supplied it in his answer (May 9, 1816). "The Chapel at Monymusk" he believed to be in good repair when he wrote "in Sept. last." "But," he added, "I have since learned that, during the late stormy winter, its roof suffered so

much as to require perhaps about £20 to put it in a proper state of security against the return of another trying season."*

* The Monymusk chapel remains now very much as it was in 1816. About 18 years after that period, it underwent some additional repairs and alterations. These, it appears, were done at the sole expense of the proprietor. But the congregation, who had offered to bear their share of the cost of repairs, at the suggestion, and mainly by the aid of Col. Fraser of Castle Fraser, raised £90 amongst themselves, and purchased a small organ, which continued to be used in the services for about thirty years. The chapel has always been *semi-private*, and consequently there has hardly been any possibility of altering it, in accordance with modern views of church architecture. In the year 1869 (August 9th), the congregation held a meeting in order to consider a proposal for building a new public church. The proposal was agreed to: a sum of £1500 was soon raised, and a plan procured. A site was refused, however, by the then proprietor of Monymusk, Sir Archibald Grant, and the money was returned to the subscribers. Since then a handsome public church has been erected at Alford, which affords accommodation for the churchmen to the west of Monymusk, and private chapels have been erected at Cluny Castle and Dunecht House, on the south and south-east.

CHAPTER XX.

1811-1816.

Cases of Clerical discipline—Messrs. Milne and Aitken—Causes of their neglect of duty, personal and private—Different bearing of the two men—Mr. Aitken passive and inoffensive—Bishop recommends him for a situation—Mr. Milne captious and aggressive—Stickles for punctuality—Anecdotes — Oxford men ; Resolutioners and Protesters—The Synod deals with him — He apologises — Protests against the minuting of his apology—Bishop withdraws his promised "act of oblivion"—The Synod urges suspension — Mr. Milne submits—Suspension averted—Mr. Milne demits his charge—Goes to New Brunswick—Case gives Primus much trouble—Illness of Primus in 1814-15—Rallies—Works harder than ever—Illness of 1816—Neglect of due precautions—Death—Its suddenness—Funeral—Whole Church mourns him.

THUS Primus Skinner was busily engaged up to the last month of his life in general church matters. But during the last two years he had to contend not only with failing health, but also with some cases of discipline, one of which gave him and his synod a good deal of trouble.

Clerical defaulters—Messrs. Milne and Aitken.

From the year 1810 two clergymen of the diocese, the Rev. James Milne, of St. Andrew's, Banff, and the Rev. Roger Aitken, of St. John's, Aberdeen, ceased to

attend the annual diocesan synod. Both of them were also absent from the "Presbytery," which met at Lewis of Fyvie (May 15, 1811), to elect a delegate for the general synod of 1811. Neither of them could allege want of opportunity, for Mr. Aitken lived in Aberdeen, where the synods were all held, and Mr. Milne came to Aberdeen in 1812 and attended the opening service of the synod, but "withdrew after worship was over." Mr. Aitken never sent any apology for absence; Mr. Milne sometimes sent an apology, but none "that could be admitted as relevant."

Causes of neglect—personal and private.

It is evident that neglect of this sort was merely symptomatic of something seriously wrong with the parties. The minute book gives no indication of the real *fons et origo mali* in either case, the few letters that are minuted merely referring generally to "causes" and "circumstances." Enough can be ascertained, however, from other sources, to show that the ecclesiastical difficulty was merely of a formal nature. Each of the parties had somehow got himself into trouble in his own immediate sphere of duty, and become careless or shy of meeting with his brethren in synod. The causes were private and personal, rather than public.

Different bearing of the two Men.

As it was, the two cases present a very different aspect in the minute book. Mr. Aitken's attitude is entirely passive. He neither says nor does anything

to offend the bishop or the synod. Till the synod of 1813, only the simple fact of his absence is minuted. On that occasion, however (August 18, 1813), the minute runs, "The Bishop and Clergy" were "very much concerned that notwithstanding his being particularly summoned to attend, the Rev. Mr. Aitken has made no apology for his absence from this and the two preceding synods, which, being a direct infringement of the 13th canon, they" deemed "his conduct in this respect highly culpable, and such as justly subjects him to the rebuke and admonition prescribed by the 26th canon, and the clerk was directed to intimate the same to Mr. Aitken accordingly." This simple admonition brought the case to a head. At the synod of 1814 (August 24), "the bishop reported, that the Rev. Roger Aitken, having thrown up his charge in this place, and gone off without asking dimissory letters," he had, with the consent of the congregation, appointed the Rev. Alexander Bruce in his place.

The Bishop recommends Mr. Aitken for a situation.

It was evidently not a case for regular "Letters dimissory," but the primus had already done what he could to obtain for Mr. Aitken another sphere of labour. In the autumn of 1813, Mr. Aitken applied for some sort of living in the gift of the Bishop of Durham, and afterwards he "offered himself as a candidate for one of the vacant missions" of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Archdeacon Pott, "in name of the committee," applied, through Dr. Gaskin (December 16, 1813), to Bishop

Skinner, for information respecting Mr. Aitken. The Bishop, as usual in matters of importance, appends a copy of his answer to Dr. Gaskin's letter. In it he says he repeats the answer which he had given to the application from Durham. "I believe" (he writes) "Mr. Aitken to be well qualified for being useful as a clergyman, although, from various causes, he has not been so successful here as might have been expected. A few years ago he built a chapel at a considerable expense, and thereby involved himself in difficulties which he can have but little prospect of surmounting while he remains in this place. It would, therefore, be an act of great benevolence in the Propagation Society, to provide for him in any of their vacant missions; and," he adds (to Dr. Gaskin), "if you have any influence with the committee of that Society, you would do a very kind and good thing in endeavouring to procure for Mr. Aitken the employment for which he seems to have offered himself"—Dec. 20, 1813.

Mr. Milne's case.

The other case was very different from Mr. Aitken's, and the only one that gave the bishop much trouble. Mr. Milne was very far from being like Mr. Aitken, passive or inoffensive in his bearing. Judged by the minutes, and especially by his own letters, he was provocative, captious, and aggressive—so much so, in fact, as to counteract all the well-meant efforts of the bishop and synod to extricate him from his position. In addition to his repeated absences from the synods, he, in the summer of 1811, absented himself from his

charge without permission, and for a longer period than was permissible by canon. The canon (11th of 1811) was probably, as he maintained, not "promulgated" at the time, but the prolonged absence was, as he well knew, an undoubted breach of the unwritten law. It appears, however, from the whole case, that Mr. Milne suffered in no way from mere technicalities of this sort, but, on the contrary, received the fairest, most patient, and most considerate treatment. He himself, however, carried technical objection and obstruction to the utmost limit.

Mr. Milne a stickler for punctuality.

From the minute book of the diocese it appears, as has been seen, that Mr. Milne was present at the introductory service of the synod of 1812, but withdrew "after worship." There was, it seems, an interval between the close of the service and the opening of the synod, a certain hour being fixed for the synodical meeting. Mr. Milne, apparently like the Oxford men on a famous occasion,* when they were summoned to a

* The occasion in question was a visitation of the University during the Commonwealth. It was thus that the visitors were baffled in the first instance:—"Armed with these powers [that is, 'to inquire by oath . . . concerning those that neglect to take the Solemn League and Covenant, and the Negative Oath,' &c.], the Visitors cited the University to appear in Convocation before them, on June 4th, 1647, between 9 and 11 o'clock, A.M. The attractions of a long sermon detained them in St. Mary's beyond the appointed hour, and as they were going in procession to the Convocation House, they met the Doctors of the University, who had left it precisely as the clock struck 11. The Bedells, with commendable spirit, cried 'Room for Mr. Vice-Chancellor,' and the Visitors, taken by surprise, actually gave place. Mr. Vice-Chancellor,

meeting at which they looked for nothing but injustice and oppression, determined to turn to account the probable unpunctuality of the brethren. According to the Banff tradition, therefore, Mr. Milne went to the place of meeting—the Longacre chapel—at the exact hour appointed, and finding, as he anticipated, no one there, he instantly left. On his way down Broad

as he passed, very civilly raised his cap to them, saying, 'Good morrow, gentlemen; 'tis past eleven of the clock!' and so passed on without taking any further notice of them."—"Oxford under the Puritans"—*Quarterly Review*, October, 1882, p. 481. This bold act was more successful than could have been expected. It averted the difficulty for the time, and concurred, with other similar steps, in staving off ejections for more than a year.

THE RESOLUTIONERS AND THE PROTESTERS.

The writer has just lighted upon a somewhat similar case of sharp practice which occurred in Scotland during the same unsettled period. The parties in this case were the resolutioners and the protesters of the Linlithgow presbytery. These two parties had separated, and formed two distinct presbyteries. In May, 1652, "the Synod ordered both parties to meet for the purpose of union." The resolutioners were the strongest party; they did not approve of the appointed conference, and they evaded it by juggling with the time of meeting. They met an hour before the usual time of meeting, and when the protesters appeared, "atte ye ordinare tyme," they declared, in effect, that the business was concluded. They "started uppe sayinge, 'wee have done,' and went yr waye." Here is the protesters' account of the matter—"The remonstrants, being much heightened by ane newe peremptor Act of ye Synod in yr favoure did meit togeider without sending word to ye minister of ye place (in whose hous ye above wreittin were togedder propounding scruples and debateing togedder anent yt Union), yea and preveening ye hoor of disiplyne which used to be aboot twel hoors before eleven hoors, they thus in ane verie clandestine way did chuise ane Moderator and Clerk and quhen ye minister of ye place withe ye reste caime atte ye ordinarie tyme of intentione to unyte upon saife termes, those started uppe sayinge 'wee have done,' and went yr waye."—*Scotsman*, May 28th, 1887.

Street, he met the bishop and some of the clergy coming up, on their way to the synod. "Where are you going, Mr. Milne?" said one of the party. "To Banff," was the reply. "I was at the chapel at the hour of meeting, but found no one there to meet." (Letter of Rev. James Davidson, Banff, April 26th, 1887.)

Mr. Milne made good his word, and held on to Banff.

The Synod deals with Mr. Milne.

It may be supposed that the above incident did not dispose the synod to a lenient view of Mr. Milne's case. "The bishop," it is minuted, "laid before the synod . . . the whole correspondence that had passed between himself and Mr. Milne, and," after mature deliberation, "the Presbyters present unanimously resolved to express," and did thereby "express their strongest disapprobation as being on Mr. Milne's part highly indecorous, insolent, and subversive of ecclesiastical order and discipline;" and they further "requested the bishop to appoint two of their number to express these their sentiments to Mr. Milne, and to demand a sufficient apology for his conduct." This was manifestly a brotherly expedient for bringing Mr. Milne to reason, and saving him from the consequences of his conduct; and it appeared as if it would succeed.

Mr. Milne apologises.

On January 7th, 1813, Mr. Milne sent the bishop a letter containing apparently a full and satisfactory

apology for all his past errors and shortcomings ; and the bishop, in his answer (January 8th), accepted Mr. Milne's "explanations in so far as to stop all further proceedings against him" in "the way of censure," and, "in consequence, what was minuted against" him "in the Minute Book of the diocese, on the 20th of August last, should be considered as abrogated and set aside, &c." The bishop added, that, at next meeting of the synod, he should "propose to the Presbyters, that a copy of your letter to me, above referred to, and this my letter to you, be inserted in the Minute Book of the diocese . . . on which occasion," he continued, it should "be mentioned, as his wish and desire, that all that had passed between them should be buried in oblivion."

Mr. Milne protests against the Minuting of his Apology.

Apparently the bishop's resolution to have the apology and acceptance minuted, gave grievous offence to Mr. Milne. It was natural that he should wish to have all notice of his case blotted from the minute book. It was not, however, a private matter between him and the bishop : it concerned the Aberdeen synod and the whole church. This might not be the end of it, and all the documents regarding it ought to be preserved, for reference, in the official records.

Apparently there was a "correspondence" on the question between Mr. Milne and the bishop, between January and August ; but, as usual, the whole correspondence between the parties, though read in synod,

was not minuted. On August 16th, however, two days before the meeting of the synod, Mr. Milne wrote to the bishop what was in form an apology for non-attendance at the coming synod, but in reality a vehement protest against the insertion of his "apology" in the minute book, and a peremptory order to expunge what had been already minuted regarding the case. "I hereby forbid," he said in conclusion, "the insertion of my letter in your minute book, and insist on the expunging of the record already made in it. Expecting to be informed in due course of this having been done, I remain," &c.

The Bishop withdraws his promised "act of oblivion."

This letter was "an end of controversy." After the reading of "the whole correspondence," the bishop proposed that Mr. Milne's letter of apology, and his own answer to the same, should be inserted in the minute book, but he stated, at the same time, that he declined "mentioning, as his wish and desire, that all that had passed between him and Mr. Milne" might "be buried in oblivion . . . in consequence of Mr. Milne's subsequent behaviour, particularly of his last letter of August 16th, 1813."

The Synod urges Suspension.

The synod unanimously endorsed the bishop's action in the case, and urged him to take summary steps. "The Presbyters present . . . unanimously

requested the bishop to inflict the sentence of suspension against Mr. Milne, appointed by the 26th canon." An "extract of this minute" was directed "to be sent to Mr. Milne and each of his managers," so that "as far as in them lay," they might "take steps to prevent" the suspension.

Mr. Milne submits; suspension averted.

Thus a way of escape was still left open. It was taken advantage of. Mr. Milne and his managers made an effort to avert actual suspension. At next year's synod (August 24, 1814), the bishop reported that "in consequence of the earnest solicitation of the managers of St. Andrew's, Banff, and from an ardent desire to prevent the lamentable consequences which they had deprecated, he had accepted a form of acknowledgment from Mr. Milne, of date April 3rd, 1814, which was read to the meeting, and had stopped all proceedings against Mr. Milne in the way of censure . . . but as sufficient time has not yet elapsed to prove the sincerity of Mr. Milne's professions, the bishop declined, in the meantime, to recommend" . . . the abrogation of the minutes.

Mr. Milne demits his Charge.

Here, so far as appears, the case closed. No sentence was ever passed upon Mr. Milne. But nevertheless, the tie between him and his Banff flock was severed before another meeting of synod. Like Mr. Aitken, Mr. Milne had probably been on the outlook

for a colonial appointment, and he found one in Fredericton, New Brunswick.* At the synod of 1815 (August 23), the bishop reported that "the Rev. James Milne had left his charge in Banff, in April last," and had "intimated his final resignation of his charge, but without asking dimissory letters from the bishop."

Doubtless, however, in this case as in Mr. Aitken's, the bishop, if appealed to, said what he could in favour of the self-expatriated pastor.

The writer has deemed it right to give at some length the particulars of this case, from the authentic records. It was a case which, being protracted over four years, made some noise in the church, and was little understood by churchmen at a distance. The

* Mr. Milne appears to have been well equipped with professional learning, and he had certainly a very decided turn for controversy. While he was at Banff, he addressed to his congregation what he called a "Tract," of 80 pages, entitled "The difference stated betwixt the Presbyterian Establishment and the Episcopal Church of Scotland." "A New Edition" of the Tract was published at Aberdeen in 1811. Mr. Milne was not long in New Brunswick before he "got into grips" with a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. "George Burns, D.D., Minister of Saint Andrew's Church, in the City of Saint John." Dr. Burns published a sermon, or the substance of a sermon, entitled "A View of the Principles and Forms of the Church of Scotland, by law Established—St. John, 1817," pp. 32. The "View" professed to be didactic, and not controversial, and the author said only 150 copies "were ordered," it "being intended exclusively for the use of his own congregation." However, Mr. Milne published a decidedly controversial reply to the view, in "Remarks on Dr. Burns's View of the Principles and Forms, &c.—St. John, 1818," pp. 40. Dr. Burns retorted in a "Letter addressed to the Rev. James Milne, A.M., in consequence of his Remarks, &c.—St. John, 1818," pp. 64. Dr. Burns was controversial enough this time; and on both sides the questions at issue were discussed in the provocative unpersuasive style of the period.

clergy of Aberdeen diocese knew the whole case in its origin and progress, and in its local as well as in its canonical and synodical aspects, and they supported the bishop through every step unanimously and cordially.

The case gave the primus much trouble, and no doubt it had something to do with the serious breakdown of his health, which took place towards the close of it. Mr. Milne had threatened an appeal to the civil power ;* and, whatever the merits of the case might be, no one could forecast the consequences of such a step at that time, and with the then very imperfect and untried code of canons. The primus took advice. Amongst others, he consulted Bishop Gleig, who recommended him to lay the whole case before Mr. J. H. Forbes (afterwards Lord Medwyn). The primus declined to trouble Mr. Forbes, and boldly took the risk—writing to Bishop Gleig that he "had resolved to suspend Mr. Milne in three weeks," if he did not submit. This brought about the submission of January 7, 1813, already referred to.

Illness of 1814-15.

Towards the close of 1814, the primus was seized with "an alarming illness" (strangury), which confined him to the house during the whole winter. "For weeks he continued in great bodily pain, but happily he was never confined to his bed or his bed chamber."

* See Bishop Gleig, p. 284.

Convalescence.

"As the spring of 1815 advanced, he recovered so far as to be released from confinement to the house." Summer brought to the overworked prelate restored health, but not caution. This illness was to him a speaking warning. It said, as plainly as words could have said it, If you wish to live on and work for the church, work in moderation; circumscribe your field of labour. It was not in the primus's nature to give heed to this warning. But he did worse than neglect it, he flew in the face of it. As soon as he could work at all, he began to work harder than ever. "Though much debilitated, he entered with characteristic keenness on his professional labours, preaching regularly every Sunday, discharging more than his share of the pastoral labours of his congregation, and taking his turn of duty as a manager of several charitable institutions in the city."

The ardent prelate had probably some idea of its being his duty to make up for lost time. Anyhow he now, in his weakness, did more than in his day of strength.

The late Bishop Fraser of Manchester speaks of a friend "dying in his Master's service, working up to his full power."

There could not, perhaps, have been a fitter termination than this to the busy life of the energetic John Skinner; and the church would have probably acquiesced more readily in the premature loss of its first and greatest bishop, had the work which over-

whelmed him been such as he alone could do. But it was by no means so. He might easily have devolved on others all his congregational and civic duties, and confined himself entirely to "that which came upon him daily, the care of all the Churches."

Instead, however, of this wise limitation, he went on, as aforetime, taking his turn of every duty—fighting in the ranks, as well as directing the battle, and straining the thin thread of life, till it snapped.

Illness of 1816.

In the summer of 1816, the primus had an attack of a yet more serious disorder than that of 1815, viz., strangulated hernia. He had rallied with difficulty in 1815; in 1816 he never rallied at all, but succumbed at once. There was now less recuperative energy; yet even now, it seems, there might have been recovery but for the most unaccountable and regrettable neglect. It was a case for a surgical operation; but the primus, it appears, had not even made known to his medical attendant the existence of the hernia till it was too late to reduce it successfully. When the true state of the patient was discovered, "the operation was most dexterously performed;" but the evil had been done—the case was past remedy. "Morbid symptoms had, ere then, taken place in the frame at large, and the bishop sank into the sleep of death without being conscious, to all human appearance, of any such change befalling him" (Memoir, p. 27). He died on Saturday, July 13th, without having been confined more than one single day to his house, and

not even one day to his bed. On the Friday (July 12th) the primus had attended prayers in church, and had posted, with his own hand, an address to the king. On Saturday he was in his own dining-room in the forenoon, little dreaming that that was his last day of life on earth.

The suddenness of the good man's call added not a little to the impression it produced throughout the church. The mourning was universal. It was felt by churchmen of all classes, and acknowledged even by those who had in life most widely differed from the departed prelate, that "a prince and a great man had fallen in Israel," and fallen in the midst of arduous labours, and when his venerable form had only just vanished from the street. It was in Aberdeen, however, where he was best known, that the feeling of regret and sorrow was deepest and most marked. The feeling was not confined to members of his own church. The funeral in the Spital churchyard, Old Aberdeen, had something of a public character. "Hundreds, besides the large company who were specially invited, followed the body to the grave." And though the church service was read at the grave—a very rare thing in the north in those days—"there was no trace of disrespect. Apparently a rude rabble had seated themselves on the walls of the mausoleum, a burying-place" near the grave, "yet when the officiating clergyman commenced the funeral service, not a breath was heard—not a head but was instantly uncovered; and, while tears were seen to flow apace, not a trace of disrespect marked the conduct of the most ragged spectator of the impressive scene."—(Memoir, p. 27).

CHAPTER XXI.

His Character.

Character as Administrator—How the Aberdeen Clergy, and how the Churchmen of the South, appreciated him—His private character—Distinctive qualities and habits. Appendix—Bishop William Skinner—His attention to students—Hospitality to the Clergy—Anecdotes.

His Character as an Administrator.

THE reader, who has accompanied the writer thus far, will probably agree with him that there can be little difficulty in estimating the public character of Bishop John Skinner. There is abundant evidence both as to his "qualities" and their "defects." His history is the history of his church for the last sixteen years of the eighteenth century, and the first sixteen of the nineteenth. Almost every public act and measure of the little church, for upwards of thirty years, bears the impress of his energetic mind. In the end his merits were fully recognised by the whole church, but especially by the churchmen of the north-east.

How the Aberdeen Clergy appreciated him.

The obituary notice that was inserted in the minute book of the diocese of Aberdeen, supplies the

best possible evidence as to the esteem in which the departed bishop was held by those who knew him longest and best, and who had had most to do with him. A single sentence will suffice to indicate the tenor of this warm, brotherly tribute—"As he lived universally respected, so he died universally regretted, and has left a name that will ever be dear to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and to the diocese of Aberdeen in particular, and which will be held in everlasting remembrance."

How the Churchmen of the South judged him.

The judgment of southern churchmen was less favourable, yet it was not substantially different. At the synod of 1811,* the leading men of the south had, as has been seen, had an opportunity of close and intimate intercourse with the primus, and thereby had come to form a far more true and favourable opinion of him. Previously they had judged him from afar, and on partial representations, and had thus taken a narrow and one-sided view of his character. Now they saw him as he was, and found him a man of breadth, and tolerance, and conciliation, as well as a man of firmness and consistency.

No doubt the southern brethren had attributed the primus's backward course in the matter of the Scotch office, and the general synod, to narrowness and intolerance. But the good man was less moved by

* Chapter xviii., p. 279.

narrowness and intolerance in himself, than by his dread of narrowness and intolerance in others. He feared lest, if a general synod met, the Anglicising party would endeavour to narrow the church, by denying toleration to the use of the Scotch office. The bishop in fact was, at that time, standing out, in his own way, for toleration and comprehension, and in these cardinal requirements it will be found that he was, at every stage of his career, in advance of his church rather than in rear of it. This view of his character stands out more clearly the more the records of the period are sifted: it came to be generally acknowledged during the last five years of his administration. He was spared to live down much misunderstanding and misconstruction, and to be looked up to as a great and successful administrator. In the end his public character stood clearly out.

His private Character.

The private life of Bishop John Skinner was in fullest harmony with his public life, and his private character was altogether exemplary and creditable. It was a consistent character, very practical and solid —one that manifested faith by works, rather than by words.

It cannot be said, however, that we have more than glimpses into his private life. We do not know much of his habits.

No doubt, like good Bishop Jolly, he had stated hours of study and devotion. He read his Hebrew

Bible at certain stated times, and at certain stated hours he entered into his chamber and prayed to his Father, which seeth in secret. But such periods of retirement and meditation must, in his case, have been comparatively short, and liable to frequent interruption. Study and even prayer sometimes gave place to work, and *orare* took the form of *laborare*.

Naturally the bishop was of a grave and reserved disposition, little inclined to speak of himself or of his own private affairs ; and indeed from the time of his elevation to the episcopate, he had little time for such things. As his letters prove, he was for ever immersed in church matters. In him public life overshadowed private life : the man was merged in the bishop. In private life, as in public, it was in the active duties—those that demanded constant watchfulness and sleepless energy—that the bishop chiefly excelled. In such matters he was always ready, always equal to the occasion—always prepared to take fortune "at the flood."

He had, by no means, the same inclination or natural aptitude for desk work. We could hardly conceive of him, unless in compliance with a clear and very urgent call of duty, as sitting down to pore over musty folios. He would never, like Bishop Jolly, have shut himself up alone in a large house, and, from mere love of learning, gone on from day to day, and from year to year, "hiving" sacred and patristic lore, and communing only with his own heart and with his "Father." Neither could he ever, by dint of application, have acquired the clear, vigorous style, and the marketable literary talent of Bishop Gleig. Still less can we

conceive him taking thought, and sitting down to his desk, and, like his father, throwing off a popular Scotch song, or a classic Latin ode.

The distinctive qualities and habits of Bishop John Skinner were the very habits and qualities that were called for in a first bishop in those critical and stirring times. They were qualities essential to his success as an administrator. Whereas the distinctive qualities and habits of certain of his eminent contemporaries were not only not essential to administrative success, but were such as might conceivably have led to administrative failure. Had John Skinner been a great scholar, or "a fine writer," or a saintly recluse, he might indeed have been an honour to his church, but he would not have been the Moses that led it forth from the state of penal bondage.

It may be said with truth, that if ever a man was "raised up" to do a great work, that man was Bishop John Skinner; and whatever may be the future of the little church for which he did the work, his will long be a prominent and honoured name in its annals.

Appendix to Chapter xxi.

Bishop William Skinner.

It was no doubt a proof of the esteem in which Bishop John Skinner was held, that his son William, who had been only 14 years in orders, was chosen to

succeed him, by a majority of 12 to 2.* As has been said, Bishop William was, in all matters of doctrine and practice, very like-minded with Bishop John. The son followed very closely in his father's footsteps ; and in addition to excellent business habits, two of the most marked characteristics of both men were, 1st, their affectionate attention to candidates for orders ; and 2nd, their great and unfailing hospitality to the clergy—an episcopal virtue of high importance eighty or even forty years ago, when the clergy differed so materially both in circumstances and in numbers from their brethren of the present day.

The Students.

The writer is one of a now small and fast diminishing band of students who went through one or the other of the two Aberdeen Universities—King's or Marischal College—in the days of Bishop William Skinner ; and he has great pleasure in bearing witness to the assiduous and kindly attention which the good man paid to the whole of the church students, especially those who looked forward to the ministry. He did everything that advice and influence, and assistance of any sort within his power could do, to help them forward. He saw them

* Bishop Gleig, who was opposed to the elevation of William Skinner, mentions, in a letter to Bishop Torry, soon after the election, that he had met an Aberdeen lady at Stirling, who told him that the Aberdeen churchmen had felt keenly the loss of Bishop John Skinner ; but they were greatly consoled when his son was chosen to succeed him.

frequently at his house. They had all a standing invitation to assemble there every Saturday during the session, at five o'clock, to tea ; and he was manifestly much disappointed when any one of them absented himself for a succession of Saturdays. At tea the talk usually ran on their studies and their prospects at the examinations. The bishop made it very evident to the students that he would rejoice greatly in their success ; and, when the session closed, and none of their number appeared in the prize-list, his disappointment was great and manifest.

On those Saturday evenings, Mrs. Skinner proved a most efficient help-meet to the bishop. She seemed to feel as much interest in the students as the bishop himself did, and she certainly took a maternal care of their manners and habits in society. This was a real kindness to the young men, many of whom were somewhat raw and bucolic. They no doubt thought sometimes, as the lady herself frequently said, that her remarks were "more plain than pleasant"; but the remarks were good-natured remarks, and prompted manifestly by the best intention. As the writer has just been reminded by a brother clergyman, Mrs. Skinner's whole bearing towards the young men, on these occasions, was of a genuinely *motherly* character.

His Hospitality.

Some reference has already been made to Bishop William Skinner's hospitality to the clergy. It was very warm, very cordial, and it was unceasing. A country clergyman, who dropt in at 1 Golden Square,

was invariably asked to dine and also to sleep there, if he remained in town over night. The clergy had all a general, standing invitation, to make the bishop's house their home whenever they were in town. Further, in whatever numbers they congregated at meetings, they were all invited and expected to assemble at 1 Golden Square, at the dinner hour. This was the case not only at the stated diocesan synods and the annual committee meeting of the friendly society, but also at all special clerical gatherings, such as for ordinations and consecrations, &c.

These meetings were almost invariably very agreeable, as free and unconstrained as a family party. Till the later years of the bishop's administration, when the Oxford movement had developed wide divergences of view, the guests were, with slight exceptions, "all of one mind." They had the same principles, the same interests, the same opinions. There was in most, if not in all of them, the *idem sentire de Ecclesiâ* the *idem velle* and the *idem nolle*. What interested one interested all, or most; and there was little risk of treading on a neighbour's toes. At all of these meetings, some wise and some witty things were spoken, and the whole conversation was flavoured by a genial brotherly humour.

It was at one of those clerical dinners at 1 Golden Square, that Bishop Terrot of Edinburgh so smartly capped one of Sidney Smith's grim jokes—one that turned on the known risk that New Zealand missionaries ran of being eaten by their converts. When this joke was repeated, one of the clergy looked across the table to Bishop Terrot, and said, "Bishop, our

people are not quite so bad as that—they don't eat us." "No," growled the bishop, "if they did that, they would keep us in better condition!" This caustic rejoinder gave an original turn to the weary ever-recurring salary question, and excited inextinguishable laughter.

The writer remembers Bishop William Skinner one day setting "the table in a roar" by a good-natured joke, at the expense of one of the most genial and popular clergymen of the diocese—one whose name is still fragrant in Buchan. This gentleman had just taken to himself a wife, who was a very clever, "managing woman." He and his wife had recently gone to visit a brother clergyman. By some mishap the gig was upset on the way, and the happy couple were thrown into a ditch. After the synod dinner, some good-natured friend referred to this untoward incident, and there was a chorus of exclamations against the gentleman's careless charioteering. "But it wasn't *he* that was driving," cried another good-natured friend, "it was the lady." "Have you given up the reins, P.?" cried the bishop.

These dinner parties, however lively and pleasant, were always models of good taste and propriety. They differed considerably from the ordinary style of middle-class dinner parties in those days. There were seldom more than two or three toasts, and they such as sprung naturally from the occasion, and there was no lingering over the wine. It was seldom, however, that the proposal of a toast or the response to it failed to elicit some spark of humour, which lighted up every face in the party.

The reader will probably agree, that a glow of genial brotherhood thus pervading the assembled clergy in the hour of relaxation from earnest official work, was a good and healthy sign. And he will not doubt, but that the hospitality which promoted such kindly feeling was, at least, one potent factor in the general union and brotherly concord which distinguished, and still to a great extent distinguishes, the clergy of the diocese of Aberdeen from those of all the other dioceses. Men of the most opposite schools, when they are in the way of meeting together in private, and quietly and freely exchanging thoughts, usually come to see that after all they have much more in common than they supposed ; and though in public they may continue to take opposite sides, and occasionally, in debate, "give each other plaguy knocks," they do not cease to respect each other, and after each encounter, they "shake hands with all the love and kindness of a brother."

Bishop William Skinner was much of the style of an English clergyman of the first quarter of the nineteenth century ; a man of sober but genuine piety, of good scholarship, but moderate learning, one who could write a good (though somewhat wordy) sermon, and deliver it well, but who had great difficulty in expressing himself without the aid of a paper. He was kindly, genial, and social, and till his later years when paternal government became unworkable, he was very popular.

On the whole Bishop Gleig, after his promotion, got on very well with Bishop John. With Bishop William he never got on well. This was no doubt chiefly

owing to Bishop Gleig's occasional neglect to consult his colleagues, when he spoke or acted in their names, as representing the church, and his too frequent disregard of the forms of business generally. He was, in fact, getting old, and eventually he had great difficulty in transacting business at all. Anyhow, the two prelates were never very friendly, and Bishop Gleig, in spite of old antagonisms, liked the father better than the son. The late Dean Torry told the writer, in one of the last years of his life, that Bishop Gleig said to him one day, quite in the Johnsonian style, "Sir, Bishop John Skinner had a better head and a better heart than Bishop William." Bishop William had nevertheless a good heart, and a fairly good head. He was a good man, of genuine but undemonstrative piety.

Between them, Bishop John and Bishop William presided over the diocese of Aberdeen for upwards of seventy years. If we add the four years of Bishop John's coadjutorship, we find that there was a Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen for seventy-four years on end—viz., from 1782 to 1857. As was remarked by Dr. Joseph Robertson, at the time of Bishop William's death, the Aberdeen churchmen seemed to find some difficulty on realising the possibility of being without a Bishop Skinner. Truly the name had become a household word, not only in the northern city, but in the whole church.

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